

Cheshire and Warrington

Local Assurance Framework

Version 6.4

21/02/22

Version Control	Date Issued	Description
Version 1.0	March 2015	Final
Version 1.1	June 2015	Updated Appendix C
Version 1.2	July 2015	Updated Appendix B
Version 2.0	February 2017	Annual review including changes from the LEP National Assurance Framework (October 2016)
Version 3.0	November 2017	Updated to include Overview and Scrutiny TORs, updated Register of Interests to include “household members”, updated P&I TORs
Version 4.0	January 2018	Updated to include recommendation of Mary Ney report. Whistle Blowing policy, TORs for the Finance and Remuneration Committee, updated Conflicts of Interest Policy, new whistle blowing policy, updated committee memberships.
Version 4.1	February 18	Updated Business case template
Version 4.2	November 18	Updated procurement policy included
Version 5.0	March 19	Updated to reflect the latest Local Assurance Framework guidance: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Updated TORs of board • Business Growth and Investment Strategy Board TORs added • Committee membership updated • Scheme of delegation added • GDPR text • Updated wording on branding guidelines • Non-compliance and recovery of funds added
Version 6.0	April 20	Updated: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overview • TORs for the committees and policies taken out as on website • Board and committee memberships updated • Delegated limits • Quality threshold for business cases • Approval processes • ESIF committee removed • Marketing Cheshire Committee added
Version 6.1	September 2020	Addresses all points raised by CEC review: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk Management updated • Structure updated with new board and committee names • Scheme of delegation updated • Added reference to Green Book appraisal checklist • New Business case template added • Monitoring and evaluation made generic as it’s required for all projects and programmes.
Version 6.2	December 2020	Updated with role of Chair and deputy chair <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provided link to board induction pack • Confirmed SME representative • Added Engagement Board TORs
Version 6.3	August 2021	Updated with links to the new website
Version 6.4	February 2022	Further updates to new website and additional links added to TORs of boards, with roles and responsibilities and delegations added for new boards.

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CHESHIRE AND WARRINGTON LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP

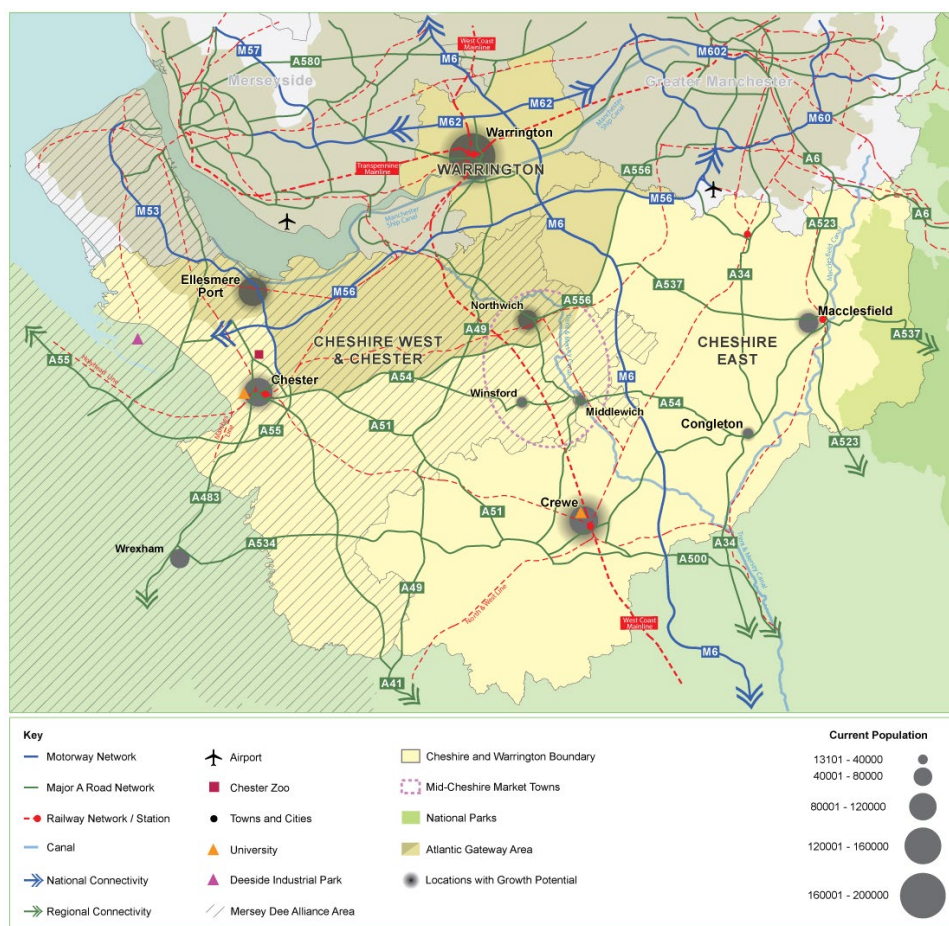
GROWTH PROGRAMME ASSURANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY FRAMEWORK

PART 1: PURPOSE, STRUCTURE AND OPERATING PRINCIPLES

1. Introduction and Overview

Local Enterprise Partnerships are locally owned partnerships between the public and private sector. The Cheshire and Warrington LEP covers the three local authority areas of Cheshire West and Chester Borough Council, Cheshire East Borough Council and Warrington Borough Council.

Figure 1: Cheshire and Warrington LEP Area Geography



Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership (“the CWLEP”) is one of 38 public-private partnership bodies across England established by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy to help determine local economic priorities and lead economic growth and job creation within the local area. The CWLEP is the strategic body through which the sub-regional activities and objectives will be supported and coordinated. The CWLEP will be supported with delivery by the Local Authority partners within the CWLEP area. Democratic oversight, governance and assurance for the activities and funding decisions of the CWLEP is assured through the membership of the LEP Board, its’ sub-committees and engagement with Sub-Regional leadership fora. This Assurance and Accountability Framework has been developed as a mechanism for the Accountable Body, the CWLEP and key stakeholders to be clear about responsibilities and to ensure good governance.

This document establishes an Assurance and Accountability Framework that the CWLEP will follow in relation to decision making including its Growth Programme (comprising but not limited to: the Local Growth Fund Programme, Growing Places Fund and European Structural Investment Fund), Growth Corridors and Enterprise Zones, and as a delivery partner for programmes which enable economic growth, e.g. skills development.

The Assurance and Accountability Framework is in three parts. Part one sets out the purpose, structure and operating principles of the Framework. Part two sets out the project prioritisation process (including development of a project pipeline). Part three sets out the programme management and investment decision process. The Framework also comprises a series of Appendices which set out the key documentation and information supporting the Framework.

The CWLEP aims to adhere to the highest standards of probity in the way that it discusses and makes decisions on how the funding devolved to it by Government is spent. This Assurance and Accountability Framework is a core element of the process and has been written to set out how the CWLEP and its partners will identify and prioritise activity and projects to support delivery of their strategic growth priorities. The framework also details the company's approach to transparency and its compliance with the National Local Assurance Framework. [National local growth assurance framework - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-local-growth-assurance-framework)

Our strategic priorities, Enabling Programmes and Intervention Priorities and the evidence base which underpins those priorities and objectives are set out in the Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) for Cheshire and Warrington published in July 2017 and updated in 2018, in the draft Local Industrial Strategy (LIS) and the Cheshire and Warrington Recovery Plan 21/22. These documents can be downloaded from the CWLEP website: [Our plans for the future - Cheshire and Warrington](#) The SEP is also supported by a series of thematic strategy and delivery plans which provide more detail on key policy areas for the LEP. These documents are also available for download from the website.

One of the initial filters for projects submitted for funding through this Assurance and Accountability Framework is alignment with the SEP's Strategic Imperatives, Intervention Priorities and Enabling Programmes. All promoting organisations will be expected to demonstrate how their proposals support the SEP and the LIS objectives.

The SEP has been refreshed and sets out the long-term economic plan to 2040. It is expected to be supplemented in due course by the Local Industrial Strategy which sets out priorities and potential interventions for the medium term through to 2030. Fit with one or more of these strategies will be essential if applying for funding from the LEP. The aims and objectives of the LEP are expected to evolve over time to adapt to the changing market conditions. The details of these changes will be recorded in the board papers and readily available on the website.

2. Purpose

The purpose of the Assurance and Accountability Framework is to support the development and delivery of a rigorously appraised and prioritised investment programme for Cheshire and Warrington which aligns to the CWLEP's strategic priorities and Enabling Programmes and Intervention Priorities and which positions the sub-region to take maximum advantage of funding opportunities which may arise.

The framework ensures that the CWLEP has in place the necessary systems and processes to manage delegated funding from central Government budgets effectively. It has been updated to include the recommendations of the Mary Ney Report; "Review of Local Enterprise Partnership Governance and Transparency" (September 17) and the HMG report "Local Enterprise Partnership Governance and Transparency – Best practice guidance" (January 18).

This document will be reviewed, refreshed and signed off by the CWLEP Board annually. One of the conditions of the Growth Deal grant offer letter is that the LEP must submit a letter from their S151 Officer to DCLG's Accounting Officer by 28th February each year certifying that its Local Assurance Framework has been agreed, is being implemented and meets the revised standards set out in the LEP Assurance Framework.

The latest version of the Local Assurance Framework is published on the CWLEP website. [Local Assurance Framework - Cheshire and Warrington](#)

3. Geography

The geographical boundary of the Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership (CWLEP) covers the administrative areas of the three unitary local authorities which make up the CWLEP, these being: -

- Cheshire East Borough Council (CEC)
- Cheshire West and Chester Borough Council (CWAC); and
- Warrington Borough Council

The SEP also recognises that Cheshire has some of the most significant science-based clusters in the north of England some of which are of global importance in key growth sectors, including advanced scientific analysis and research; pharmaceuticals R&D and manufacturing; chemical engineering; energy and nuclear engineering; radio-astronautics; and astronomy. Collectively these assets form the Cheshire Science Corridor, a crescent that crosses the northern part of Cheshire and Warrington sub-region, linking together nationally and internationally significant research facilities including Capenhurst, Sci-Tech at Daresbury and Jodrell Bank.

CWLEP secured Enterprise Zone status for a number of sites within Cheshire Science Corridor in April 2016, these being:

- **Alderley Park** - World class life sciences research hub where Beta Blockers were discovered and developed. This site also links into the wider Manchester Science Corridor development.
- **Birchwood Park, Warrington** - a nationally significant nuclear cluster including the National Nuclear Laboratory
- **University of Chester's Thornton Science Park** - formerly Shell's European Research HQ and home to the Faculty of Science and Engineering and Energy Security and Innovation Observing System for the Subsurface (ESIOS)
- **Protos** – formerly Ince park, where Peel Environmental are developing a nationally strategic energy hub including wind farm, biomass and energy from waste plant
- **Ellesmere Port** – a portfolio of pump-primed sites in Ellesmere Port suitable for logistics, advanced manufacturing and environmental technologies.

The potential for further development corridors is being explored and developed by the LEP. Details of any changes will be available in board papers and on the website if and when approved.

4. LEP Operational Structure

4.1. Membership of the LEP

The LEP is a legal company limited by guarantee. The membership of the CWLEP is set out in its Articles of Association updated 6 May 2020 and is:

- LEP Chair
- LEP Deputy Chair
- Cheshire East Borough Council
- Cheshire West and Chester Borough Council
- Warrington Borough Council

The company operates with a board of directors, normally around 16 in number, comprising representatives from the Local Authorities, Private Sector, Educational institutions, and charities. The Chair has to be from the private sector and there has to be a nominated Deputy Chair. All board private sector board members are appointed on three years terms which can be extended for a further three years by agreement of the board. Note further extensions are permitted.

4.2. Abiding principles

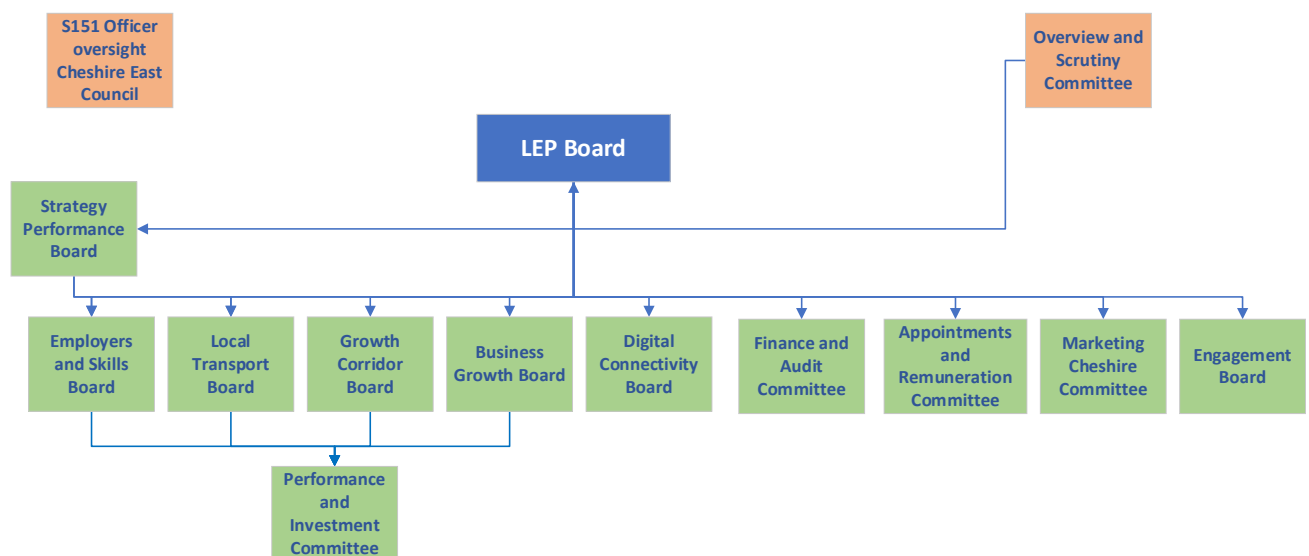
All the board and committee members are required to act in accordance with the Nolan Principles. They are required to sign a copy to show they have understood them and will adhere to them. They should also:

- Act solely in the public interest in line with the Nolan principles; make decisions purely on merit, in accordance with agreed LEP processes and act with regularity and propriety when managing public money;
- Keep records which demonstrate they meet all their legal obligations and all other compliance requirements placed upon them ensuring these are accessible if requested;
- Actively cooperate with stakeholders and other regeneration organisations. This involves engaging deliberately and constructively with the private sector and public sector including national and local partners such as: Government Departments, subnational bodies, Local Authorities, third sector representatives, community interest groups, universities and research institutions, MCAs and other LEPs in order to collect information which can be factored into decisions;
- Ensure partnership working and engagement on projects or decisions which are likely to have an effect across LEP borders or significantly affect the plans of a MCA or LEP; and
- Champion successes within their communities, including bringing to the attention of Government local growth projects which should be recognised as innovative or examples of best practice and ensuring that stakeholders are able to make informed decisions on local growth matters.

4.3. Roles and Responsibilities

The LEP operates within a clearly defined Governance structure.

Figure 2: LEP Board and Sub-Board Structure



The CWLEP Board has ultimate responsibility for setting the corporate and strategic direction of the CWLEP as defined in its Articles of Association (Company No: 04453576). Some elements of operational and strategic responsibility are discharged through a series of formal Board Sub-Committees each chaired by a member of the CWLEP Board and each with its own defined Terms of Reference ([see Delegated decision making and authority](#) is set out in the CWLEP's Scheme of Delegation, which is shown in Section 5 and further detailed [here](#)). The Board and all sub boards and committee meetings, with the exception of the Remunerations and Appointment Committee shall be open to the public, although items may also be discussed in closed session where confidentiality needs to be maintained

4.4. The CWLEP Board

The purposes of the CWLEP Board are to set the corporate and strategic direction of the organisation, satisfying itself that the business plan is in accordance with the strategic direction and that the milestones are sufficiently ambitious, ensure good systems of governance and control and to set the risk appetite and manage risk accordingly (please see section 24 for further detail).

The CWLEP Board is responsible for:

- Ensuring that all activity is in accordance with the Articles of Association of the Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership which is a private company limited by guarantee;
- Approving projects put forward for funding under different funding streams and programmes;
- Providing clear levels of delegated authority to the CWLEP Executive and the various sub-committees which report directly to the CWLEP Board;
- Considering and agreeing a position on major items of strategic importance;
- Ensuring effective communication and engagement with the LEP's stakeholders at a local and national level.

4.4.1. Role and responsibility of the Chair and deputy Chair

The role of the chair is shared between the Chair and Deputy chair.

Their responsibilities are:

- Work closely with the Board, political leaders and the LEP's Executive Team, to ensure that C&W has in place a compelling evidence based future strategy and narrative for its economy;
- Grow the C&W economy from £30 billion p.a. in 2019 to £50 billion by 2040, improving productivity per hour and delivering inclusive growth;
- Deliver the C&W Local Industrial Strategy, building on C&W's sector strengths, in particular clean energy, life sciences and advanced manufacturing, and strengthening the sub-region's five foundations of productivity;
- Be the principal advocate in public and the media of the LEP's economic strategy and, through Marketing Cheshire, a subsidiary of the LEP, successfully market C&W as a great place to live work and invest to national and international investors and current and potential future residents;
- Hold the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and the Executive Team to account for the successful delivery of all aspects of the LEP's programme;
- Through the LEP's Growth and Skills Hub, ensure that businesses in C&W can easily access the support they need to start up and grow, in particular improving their access to skilled staff via the LEP's Virtual Institute of Technology;
- Ensure that the C&W LEP continues to be regarded by central Government as exhibiting exceptional standards of governance and strategy development and to achieve the same standards of programme delivery;
- In close collaboration with the LEP CEO, build strong relationships with Ministers, senior officials in Whitehall and senior local authority politicians and officers in C&W and across the North of England and North Wales;
- Collaborate across a wider geography will deliver better outcomes, ensure that the C&W LEP plays a full part and takes full advantage of its membership of NP11 – the group of eleven Northern LEPs working together to grow the economy of the North;
- Play a full role in the national LEP Network, helping to ensure that all LEPs exhibit the highest levels of governance and competence and that LEPs enjoy a strong and productive working relationship with Ministers.

The Main accountabilities

- Provide overall leadership of the LEP Board.
- Through leadership of the Board, and working closely with the Executive and key stakeholders, set the strategic direction and priorities for the LEP.
- Build and maintain effective relationships with the LEPs major stakeholders, including political leaders in C&W, NP11, 'Transport for the North', the LEP Network and in Westminster and Whitehall.
- To promote a culture of openness, objectivity, collaboration and debate within the LEP, acting as a role model for the LEP's values and culture.
- To ensure that the LEP is well led, has a strong programme of internal performance management and scrutiny, and that the LEP pursues a policy of transparency and openness that enables the public to understand and scrutinize the role of the LEP.
- To ensure and require that succinct, comprehensive, timely, accurate and relevant information is placed before the board and its committees to allow them to reach informed conclusions.
- To maintain an overview of economic and strategic issues in C&W and provide advice and support to the LEP CEO on these matters.
- To preside over board meetings and ensure that time in meetings is used productively, that there is open and constructive debate and that any conflicts of interest are managed as appropriate.
- To ensure the Board demonstrates and promotes diversity and inclusion and is representative of the communities served by the LEP.

Further detail can be found on the [LEP Board's Terms of Reference](#).

4.4.2. CWLEP Board Diversity

The CWLEP Board is selected through open, transparent and non-discriminatory competition, which assesses each candidate on merit. Use of traditional and social media is used to advertise vacancies. The CWLEP strives to ensure that the Board is reflective of Cheshire and Warrington as a whole, including in terms of business composition and scale (including voluntary sector and social enterprise), geographic spread, gender and ethnicity in line with its equality and diversity policy and we monitor this.

It has been set up in accordance with the Government requirement that it must have a private sector chair, with at least two-thirds of the rest of the members coming from the private sector. Other Board membership is drawn from local authority leaders and other relevant public sector organisations. The Board also has private sector representation. In line with government guidance at least 33% of the Board must also be female and there should be a private sector member which represents the SME sector. The maximum number of board members permitted is 20 with no more than five members co-opted (board members temporarily appointed to assist with specific matters).

There is also a requirement for the s151 from the LEPs accountable body to attend a majority of board meetings. Senior Executives of the LEP will also normally attend board meetings but carry no voting rights.

With regards to succession planning the LEP Chair in conjunction with the LEP executive is responsible for ensuring that for chair, board members and committee members there is continuity. When new appointments are required they will be done so in a timely manner which allows for training and a handover period.

4.4.3. Induction process for new board and committee members

Following appointment Board members will be taken through an induction process. The induction pack can be found here: [Induction Pack Link](#)

There are a number of boards and sub-committees that report to the CWLEP Board that have various roles and responsibilities as detailed below:

4.5. Strategy Programme Board

The purpose of the Strategy Programme Board is to prepare, maintain and publish a Strategic Economic Plan for Cheshire and Warrington and any underpinning strategies. The plan should be prepared and updated following extensive consultation with relevant partners and stakeholders.

The Strategy Programme Board is responsible for:

- Maintaining the LEP's Strategic Economic Plan and e.g. the Local Industrial Strategy and the evidence base required to underpin the plans which are approved by the board.
- Making recommendations to the LEP Board for changes to the LEP's Strategic priorities
- Commissioning work to expand and enhance the evidence base used to set strategic priorities
- Identifying the interventions necessary to deliver the LEP's objectives and from that develop a prioritised project pipeline to take maximum advantage of the funding streams available to the LEP and its partners
- Making recommendations to the LEP Board for projects put forward for funding from funding programmes where responsibility hasn't been delegated to another sub board.
- Engaging the LEP's stakeholders in the development and refresh of its core strategies.

Further detail can be found on the [Strategy Programme Board's Terms of Reference](#).

4.6. Performance and Investment Committee

The purpose of the Performance and Investment Committee is to hold the LEP Executive to account for programme delivery and performance and to ensure that projects put forward for funding support the LEP's strategic priorities and offer value for money.

The Performance and Investment Committee is responsible for:

- Providing scrutiny and oversight for the LEP's delivery programmes
- Monitoring performance of the programmes and delivery plan during the year
- Ensuring that the processes set out in the LEP's Assurance and Accountability Framework are adhered to
- Reviewing and providing critical challenge to projects put forward for funding or endorsement by the LEP
- Ratifying projects put forward for funding from the LEPs different funding streams
- Reviewing and approving the LEP's Corporate and Programme risks.

Further detail can be found on the [Performance and Investment Committee's Terms of Reference](#).

4.7. Local Transport Board

The Local Transport Board (LTB) has an advisory role to the CWLEP and provides operational oversight to the Integrated Transport Investment Programme and has a role in ensuring that transport investments support the growth conversation with Government, the strategic transport priorities of the CWLEP and the local plans and regeneration proposals of the constituent local authorities. Schemes will then be prioritised alongside other transport and non-transport schemes using the CWLEP's Assurance and Accountability Framework.

The Local Transport Board is responsible for:

- Developing and maintaining an Integrated Transport Investment Programme of capital projects for the sub region to support the LEP's objectives as set out in the Strategic Economic Plan and the Sub Regional Transport Strategy;

- Making decisions on devolved local authority major funds for projects which fall within the delegated limits of the LTB;
- Ensuring that the prioritisation processes are aligned to the LEPs Assurance and Accountability Framework;
- Develop Memoranda of Understanding with key Agencies: Highways Agency, Network Rail, Airports, Freight and Logistics Organisations, Train Operating Companies to influence and support policy, priorities and investment;
- Engaging with local authorities in relation to its strategic projects and transport priorities, related strategic development control issues, Local Plans and regeneration proposals;
- Engaging with Government on consultations, innovative solutions and pilots; and
- Engaging with and influence neighbouring transport authorities.

4.8. Finance and Audit Committee

The purpose of the Finance and Audit Committee is to provide assurance to the Board that the financial, audit and budgetary systems utilised by the LEP are robust and effective.

The Finance and Audit Committee is responsible for:

- Receiving and reviewing financial and budgetary information prior to consideration by the LEP Board, providing advice and guidance to the Board as requested;
- Recommending the annual budget to the Board;
- Monitoring compliance of the LEP, as a private company limited by guarantee, with the financial and legal requirements placed on such a company;
- Ensuring that the company's internal financial controls and risk management systems are adequate and effective;
- Ensuring that the company's compliance, whistleblowing and fraud detection procedures are adequate and effective;
- Monitoring and reviewing the effectiveness of the company's internal audit function in the context of its overall risk management system;
- Overseeing the relationship with the company's external auditor.

Further detail can be found on the [Finance and Audit Committee's Terms of Reference](#).

4.9. Remuneration and Appointments Committee

The purpose of the Remuneration and Appointments Committee is to support the Board in discharging its responsibilities relating recruitment, retention and management of staff, and for pay and benefits of staff and Board members.

The Remuneration and Appointments Committee is responsible for:

- Develop and maintain strategy and policy on salaries, terms and conditions of employment on behalf of the Board, taking full account of labour market movement;
- Ensure a set of HR and personnel policies are maintained on behalf of the Company;
- Resolve any HR or personnel issues referred to it from the Board;
- Have delegated authority to set the remuneration policy of the LEP;
- Recommend to the Board the annual pay award of the Chief Executive and Chair;
- Be aware of/advise on employee benefit structures throughout the company;
- Consider and decide on relevant appeals made under the terms of the Grievance, Disciplinary and Harassment policies;

- Monitor policies relating to recruitment, selection, training, performance, reward and retention of staff;
- Consider and agree any redundancy processes and payments;
- Make whatever recommendations to the Board it deems appropriate on any area within its remit where action or improvement is needed.

4.10. Marketing and Communications Committee

The Marketing Cheshire Board will be responsible for:

- Development of a strategy for marketing Cheshire and Warrington as a great place to invest, live, work and study;
- Ensure that the sub-region's approach to business support is visible and that the strategy helps to ensure that Cheshire and Warrington is a great place to run and grow a business (start, scale, expand);
- Develop a stakeholder engagement strategy to ensure we are successfully engaging and informing our most influential stakeholders, reviewing the channels the LEP and Marketing Cheshire use to communicate with their stakeholders;
- Undertaking a review of core assets such as LEP family of brands and websites.

4.11. Business Growth and Investment Strategy Board

The focus will be on matching business demand to the supply of business support/influencing policy decisions. Ensuring strong private sector leadership/representation and supported by public stakeholders with the ability to make decisions and influence others. This will be achieved by the following:

Define and deliver a high-quality support offer in line with Government contract

- Develop local insight to identify priorities to inform 'proactive/targeted' business-support provision and of course identify/respond to gaps;
- Collaborate with partners to ensure a 'no wrong door' approach with shared intel and service standards;
- Agree more appropriate (locally driven) KPIs that will highlight meaningful impact and efficiency of our collective work;
- Celebrate the impact of joint working through case study to reinforce team culture;
- Considering performance monitoring and evaluation reports including financial reports;
- Considering re-profiling of the programme if required to ensure optimum outcomes are maximised;
- Establishing and overseeing working groups as required;
- Regular reporting of progress to the LEP Board and BEIS.

Further detail can be found on the [Business Growth and Investment Strategy Board's Terms of Reference](#).

4.12. Overview and Scrutiny Committee

The objective of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee is to make positive recommendations for how future decisions of the LEP can be effectively implemented.

All the deliberations of the committee will be held in public and made public in order to help transparency with regard to how and why decisions have been made by the LEP board and committees.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is specifically charged to:

- Review the decision making of each of the sub-committees and Board of the LEP to ensure due process has been followed and there is a transparent audit trail;
- Review the progress of the programmes that the LEP manages including but not limited to: Local Growth Fund, Growing Place Fund, European Programme and the Growth Hub. The committee should identify and/or consider issues raised, promote best practice and make recommendations for improvement if appropriate;
- Review the implementation of the Strategic Economic Plan and identify opportunities for improvement;
- Review the output and outcome information of the programmes to ensure that the LEP activities are having a beneficial impact on the economy of the LEP area;
- To make recommendations for consideration to the Board and or committee with respect to the discharge of any functions;
- Review and advise the LEP board on matters of transparency, ensuring that the LEP is meeting the highest standards of transparency and, in particular, the required standards as set down by the Central Government;
- To commission and review mid-term and end of term evaluations of programmes and projects;
- To liaise with other LEPs over the development and dissemination of best practice.

Further detail can be found on the [Overview and Scrutiny Committee's Terms of Reference](#).

4.13. Digital Connectivity Board

The Digital Connectivity Board has the following role(s):

- Identifying the priorities for improving digital connectivity across the sub-region which will support and deliver the LEP's vision and wider priorities;
- Influencing those organisations which can help to deliver the priorities, including Government Departments, Local Authorities, Connecting Cheshire, digital infrastructure companies;
- Working with, influencing, and taking account of the issues and priorities identified by relevant sub-regional structures including Employer Skills and Education Board, Digital Skills Partnership, other LEP Boards and partnerships;
- In addition to the responsibilities above the Digital Connectivity Board also provides relevant advice to the CWLEP on strategic digital connectivity policy, strategies and plans for the sub-region.

Further detail can be found on the [Digital Connectivity Board's Terms of Reference](#).

4.14. Engagement Board

The Engagement Board has the following roles:

- To influence emerging plans to ensure that the views and needs to young people are factored in.
- To advocate the work and plans of the LEP to ensure that the wider youth population feel able to share their views.
- To act as critical friend in the development of new plans and initiatives targeting young people.

The objective of the Engagement Board is to ensure that young people living in the subregion have an opportunity to express their views and values in order to influence the future of Cheshire and Warrington at this exciting and challenging time. The Board will also work to secure Cheshire and Warrington as the healthiest, most sustainable, most inclusive and fastest growing sub-region in the country.

The Engagement Board will:

- Review existing plans and initiatives to offer advice on improvements, relevance to young people, inclusivity, communication, and language;
- Attend Board and sub-committees to offer opinions on housing, transport, digital infrastructure and more;
- Provide a forum for young people to express their views and opinions, giving them the opportunity to view and comment on the LEP's plans and to engage with and involve other young people in the region.

Further detail can be found on the [Engagement Board's Terms of Reference](#).

4.15. Membership of the Boards and Committees

Current membership of the Boards and Committees can be found on the LEP website. Membership will be reviewed as required with maximum term of service being two periods of a maximum of three years each. Each sub board and committee will have a minimum of 2 board members, one of whom will be chair and another will be deputy chair, and one independent representative. Details of board and committee membership can be found here: [Boards and Committees - Cheshire and Warrington](#)

5. Scheme of Delegation

The LEP board agreed the following scheme of delegation at the July 2019 board meeting to help make decision making more efficient.

Sub-board / Committee	Approved Delegation	Level of Delegation
Strategy Programme Board	The Strategy Delivery board sets the overarching vision and strategy for economic growth in the Cheshire and Warrington LEP area (including sign off of the SEP, LIS, Growth deal, ESIF strategies), including identifying priorities for investment. The committee oversees the development of programmes and projects that seek to deliver the priorities set out in the Strategic Economic (SEP) and related strategies and, going forward, the Local Industrial Strategy (LIS). As long as proposed projects are in line with the objectives set out in overarching vision and strategy approved by the full LEP Board, then the committee should have delegated authority to approve projects up to £2.5m.	£2.5m
Growth Corridor Board	The Growth Corridor Board is responsible for setting and overseeing the strategic direction and operational delivery of the Cheshire Science Corridor Enterprise Zone including reviewing and approving of all businesses cases for investment in the EZ and ratifying Business Rate Discount applications approved by the EZ Steering Group. EZ investment projects can vary between £500k up to c.£5m, but typically range between £1m-£2.5m. The annual EZ Investment Programme is to be approved by the LEP board and Strategy Delivery board with the EZ Board having delegated authority to approved projects up to £2.5m.	£2.5m
Local Transport Board	The main role of the Local Transport Board is to provide strategic direction to transport in the sub-region. Therefore, the spending decisions are limited to the deployment of consultancy spend. Significant capital investments are taken by Transport Authorities.	£500k

Employers Skills Board	<p>The Employers' Skills and Education Board works with other employers, local authorities, universities, colleges and other training providers to ensure that businesses in Cheshire and Warrington have the skills they need to grow and that all our residents have the skills they need to progress and play a full part in the economy.</p> <p>The Board, supported by the LEP Executive, will make investment decisions on skills and education up to £1million ensuring value for money and strategic fit with the LEP's Skills Strategy and local priorities. The Board will champion investment in skills and education and communicate effectively with the business community to advise on new developments and local opportunities.</p>	£1m
Business Growth Board	The Business Growth Board oversees the activities of the LEP focussed on supporting businesses in the sub-region and, in particular, SMEs. In addition, the remit extends to Inward Investment, initiatives driven by the Department of Industry and Trade and preparations for Brexit. On occasion, e.g. in response to Covid, the LEP has provided direct financial support in the form of grant schemes, hence a delegated authority of £500k.	£500k
Digital Connectivity Board	The remit of the Digital Connectivity Board is yet to be finalised and confirmed. The board has been established to support improving digital infrastructure in the sub-region, to promote digital inclusivity and to facilitate digital investment. Initially, a delegated limit of £500k has been provided for investments which will be identified as part of the Digital Infrastructure Plan	£500k
Performance and Investment Committee	The Performance and Investment Committee is a review committee, and no financial decisions can be taken without approval from P&I. It will review all financial decisions being made by other sub-committees and following consideration will either confirm final approval, or else revert the decision back to the full LEP Board depending on the delegated authority of the sub-committee, whose decision it is reviewing.	N/A

5.1. Sub-regional Engagement Arrangements

The Cheshire and Warrington Sub Regional Programme Office (hosted by Warrington Borough Council) will undertake the administrative role required to support the Leaders and Chief Executives meetings. This role includes, but is not limited to:

- Publishing the Leaders and Chief Executives processes and outcomes
- Preparation and circulation of meeting minutes and agenda, which are published at www.warrington.gov.uk/committees
- Facilitating engagement with stakeholders

Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership Executive provides similar support and functions to the CWLEP Board and its sub committees, along with policy and strategy advice.

6. Cross-LEP Working

A number of the priorities, themes and interventions identified by the CWLEP in its Strategic Economic Plan are not confined to Cheshire and Warrington. On occasion the CWLEP Board will identify opportunities to work with other LEPs (either on a geographical or sector basis) and on such occasions a clear set of principles for collaboration will be established and agreed prior to activity commencing.

In instances where Cheshire and Warrington LEP jointly fund activities or projects with other LEPs, clear operational and governance arrangements will be agreed prior to activity commencing, for example in the Greater Manchester and Cheshire Life Science Fund (GMCLSF). This is to ensure maximum effectiveness but with appropriate control and will need to be on a case-by-case basis relating to the specific investment proposals and agreed with the accountable bodies. The Limited Partners Agreement and Investment and Operations Guidelines for the Fund set out the terms under which the Fund operates. An investment Advisory Panel (IAP) also exists to give guidance and advice to the Fund Manager and Limited partners in respect of implementing the objective of the GMCLSF. The IAP consists of investor members and non-voting members and meets at least quarterly.

The CWLEP is one of two LEPs and seven Local Authority partners in the **Constellation Partnership**, a ground-breaking partnership to work with investors, communities and landowners to maximise the benefits of HS2 investment through plan-led growth. This was formerly known as the Northern Gateway Development Zone and its purpose and scope is set out in the Concordat signed by Stoke and Staffordshire LEP and Cheshire and Warrington LEP on 23rd October 2015.

CWLEP plays an active role in the Northern Powerhouse 11 Partnership which encompasses 11 northern LEP areas.

7. Policies and Procedures

7.1. Whistle blowing and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Whistle Blowing and the secretariat for the Overview and Scrutiny committee is provided by Warrington Borough Council to provide independence. Whenever and wherever appropriate the CWLEP Executive will be supported by a team of officers from the constituent local authorities directly responsible for those functional areas for which projects and schemes are being progressed.

It is expected that consultants will be used to provide additional technical support as required and independent scrutiny of the emerging Business Cases that the Performance and Investment Committee will act to review and consider. This work will be managed by the CWLEP Executive Team.

Strong working relationships are in place between the CWLEP Executive and the Local Authorities to ensure that resources are aligned to support the CWLEP's strategic objectives and priority interventions. The Directors of Economic Development (or equivalent) from each of the constituent Local Authorities sit on the CWLEP Strategy Delivery board, and the CWLEP Performance and Investment Committee includes senior representation from each Local Authority along with the Section 151 Officer from the CWLEP's Accountable Body. This representation ensures strong alignment of strategic priorities and resources.

7.2. Code of Conduct and Conflicts of Interest

It is essential that the CWLEP, as a body, acts in the interests of the Cheshire and Warrington area as a whole and not according to the sectoral geographical interests of individual member organisations or Board members.

Voting rights are set out in the organisation's Articles of Association.

All CWLEP representatives have an obligation to act in the best interests of the LEP and in accordance with its governing documents. This includes each and every employee and Board member signing up to abide by the Seven Principles of Public Life.

Conflicts of interests may arise where an individual's personal or family interests and/or loyalties conflict with those of the CWLEP or the group or meeting that employees or Board members are attending. All staff will declare interests as set out in the LEP's Declaration of Interest Policy. The policy can be found here:

<https://cheshireandwarrington.com/media/it4ahgly/declaration-of-interests.pdf>

The CWLEP will manage conflicts of interest in accordance with existing protocols and codes of conduct and with the organisation's Code of Conduct and Conflict of Interest Policy. The policy can be found here: <https://cheshireandwarrington.com/media/5dvczljx/code-of-conduct-conflict-of-interest-policy.pdf>

7.3. Gifts and Hospitality

CWLEP has a policy setting out its position on the receipt of gifts and hospitality which can be found here: <https://cheshireandwarrington.com/media/xhpduv1g/gifts-hospitality-policy.pdf>

All Board members and staff are required to abide by the terms of that policy.

7.4. Complaints Policy

The CWLEP and our Councils have procedures in place to deal with and respond to complaints from stakeholders, members of the public, internal whistle-blowers in cases where it is alleged a Council or the CWLEP is acting in breach of the law or failing to safeguard public funds.

The CWLEP also has a whistleblowing procedure which is monitored by the organisation's Finance and Audit Committee. The accountable body will be made aware of any whistleblowing submissions to the CWLEP. The Whistle Blowing Policy can be found here: <https://cheshireandwarrington.com/media/4ttb4bek/18-02-14-whistleblowing-policy-v5-1.pdf>

The policy includes details of how confidential disclosures can be made, who is responsible for dealing with Whistleblowing and the LEP processes and timescales for dealing with any issues raised.

7.5. Equality and Diversity

The Cheshire and Warrington LEP promotes a diverse area and communities, and we believe that it is important that we reflect this diversity. Our approach to ensure that we do this as much as we can to achieve this is set out here: <https://cheshireandwarrington.com/media/2mffjwjj/equality-and-diversity-policies.pdf>

7.6. Freedom of Information

Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership is a non-statutory body. Through the accountable and National Local Assurance Framework we are subject to the Freedom of Information Act 2018 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004.

The LEPs FOI policy can be found at: <https://cheshireandwarrington.com/media/dlclg2ubc/freedom-of-information-policy.pdf>

7.7. Data Protection

Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership will comply with data protection legislation including the General Data Protection Regulation and the Data Protection Act 2018.

When handling data we will ensure that the data being handled is secured by appropriate measures against unauthorised or unlawful Processing, and against accidental loss, destruction or damage.

We will maintain safeguards appropriate to our size, scope and business, our available resources, the amount of Personal Data that we own or maintain on behalf of others and identified risks (including use of encryption and Pseudonymisation where applicable). We will regularly evaluate and test the effectiveness of those safeguards to ensure security of our Processing of Personal Data. We are responsible for protecting the Personal Data we hold. The company will implement reasonable and appropriate security measures against unlawful or unauthorised Processing of Personal Data and against the accidental loss of, or damage to, Personal Data. We will exercise particular care in protecting Sensitive Personal Data from loss and unauthorised access, use or disclosure.

We will follow all procedures and technologies we put in place to maintain the security of all Personal Data from the point of collection to the point of destruction. We may only transfer Personal Data to third-party service providers who agree to comply with the required policies and procedures and who agree to put adequate measures in place, as requested.

We must maintain data security by protecting the confidentiality, integrity and availability of the Personal Data, defined as follows:

- (a) Confidentiality means that only people who have a need to know and are authorised to use the Personal Data can access it.
- (b) Integrity means that Personal Data is accurate and suitable for the purpose for which it is processed.
- (c) Availability means that authorised users are able to access the Personal Data when they need it for authorised purposes.

7.8. General Data Protection Regulation

The LEP is committed to following the GDPR principles:

- We will process all personal data fairly and lawfully
- We will only process personal data for specified and lawful purposes
- We will endeavour to hold relevant and accurate personal data and where practical we will keep it up to date
- We will not keep personal data for longer than is necessary
- We will keep all personal data secure
- We will endeavour to ensure that personal data is not transferred to countries outside of the European Economic Area (EEA) without adequate protection

Details of our GDPR policy, including training arrangements and documentation retention policy, can be found here: [Privacy Policy - Cheshire and Warrington](#)

7.9. Audit and Scrutiny

The CWLEP will agree with the Accountable Body an audit schedule for **local audit and scrutiny** for the projects within the LEP's Funding programmes on an annual basis to be audited.

An **independent Overview and Scrutiny** Committee has been established to provide check and balance in the operation of the CWLEP and to ensure accountable and transparent decision making as well as improving systems and processes.

7.10. Branding and Publicity

The LEP is committed to meeting government brand guidelines for all its programmes and projects and will ensure that appropriate logos and wording are included on all branding including newsletters, websites, social media, site boards etc for all projects. The Northern Powerhouse logo will be used as standard in all marketing materials. In addition, the opportunity to include a quote from the relevant Minister in press releases and invites to events as appropriate will be co-ordinated with the Local Growth Team.

8. Accountable Body

Funding devolved to the CWLEP from Government is managed on its behalf by Cheshire East Council as Accountable Body. The S.151 Officer from Cheshire East has reviewed this Assurance and Accountability Framework and is a member of the LEP's Performance and Investment Committee and the Audit and Finance Committee. The S151 officer is also an observer on the LEP board.

The primary role of CEC, acting as the Accountable Body, is to hold the devolved monies allocated to the CWLEP (including Local Growth Fund) and make payments to the partner delivery bodies. It also accounts for these funds in such a way that they are separately identifiable from the Accountable Body's own funds and provide financial statements to the CWLEP Executive as required.

There is an operating agreement in place between CEC and CWLEP which sets out the roles and responsibilities of each party together with their respective liabilities. The Chair, Chief Executive and the Finance and Commercial Director of the LEP shall work with the section 151 officer to agree an effective responsibility arrangement which will be set out in a Service Level Agreement which is regularly reviewed and updated. The SLA sets out the agreed systems and practices which support both the legal and financial responsibilities of the accountable body and the leadership role and democratic accountabilities of the LEP. These support both the accountable body role in ensuring proper, transparent decisions which deliver value for money and also support timely informed decision making by the LEP. The SLA also sets out the circumstances under which the accountable body would not comply with a LEP decision and the process for both parties working together to seek a mutually agreeable resolution where disputes arise.

The section 151 officer must also provide an Annual Assurance Statement 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 as part of the LEP's Annual Conversation with government – beyond this, they are free to delegate.

Where concerns or improper financial administration are identified the section 151 officer shall provide recommendations for improvements to be made. The LEP board shall be responsible for making changes to address the concerns in line with the recommendations following local discussion with the section 151 officer in line with the agreed responsibility arrangement. Where the board does not agree with the recommendations and no agreement on the way forward can be reached with the section 151 officer, the matter shall be referred to MHCLG or to the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy who will escalate as appropriate.

As Accountable Body, Cheshire East Council is responsible for the following activities:

- Ensuring that the decisions and activities of the CWLEP in relation to devolved funding conform with legal requirements with regard to equalities, social value, environment, State Aid, public procurement etc;
- Ensuring (through their Section 151 Officer) that the funds are used appropriately and in accordance with the conditions placed on the grant;
- Ensuring that the Assurance Framework, as approved, is being adhered to;
- Maintaining the official record of decisions relating to devolved funding;
- Ensuring that there are arrangements for local audit of funding allocated by CWLEP at least equivalent to those in place for local authority spend

The Finance and Commercial Director of the CWLEP will work closely with the s151 Officer, and to all intents and purposes, act as a deputy s151 Officer for the LEP, in support of achieving these objectives. The role of the Finance and Commercial Director will be embedded into LEP procedures to support this function.

CIPFA and the Cities and Local Growth Unit have developed five principles which they expect the section 151 officer role for LEPs to meet when instilling good and proportionate financial governance:

- Enshrining a corporate position for the section 151 officer in LEP assurance
- Creating a formal/structured mandate for the section 151 officer
- Embedding good governance into decision making
- Ensuring effective review of governance
- Appropriate skills and resourcing

This Local Assurance Framework recognises the CIPFA guidance as provided in its “Principles for Section 151 Officers in Accountable Bodies working with Local Enterprise Partnerships” document and sets out the role of the Accountable Body and its Section 151 Officer, and the relationship with the LEP as regards governance and decision-making responsibilities and working arrangements. Appendix F shows local responses/ comments in respect of the 5 principles.

The relationship of a promoting authority or organisation in respect of a particular scheme or project seeking Local Growth Funding will be documented in formal legal agreements with the CWLEP in a format agreed by the Accountable Body.

Promoting authorities or organisations will be responsible for providing suitable evidence and assurances to the Accountable Body that all necessary internal approvals and processes have been followed in respect of particular schemes.

9. Transparency and Local Engagement

While the CWLEP is a private company, limited by guarantee it will, in line with the Government’s expectations of Local Enterprise Partnerships, adhere as far as practicable to the Local Government Transparency Code.

The LEP has an established website which will be used to publish all of the following information in line with National Assurance framework and the Mary Ney review of LEPs:

- The Strategic Economic Plan (and Local Industrial Strategy in due course)
- The CWLEP Board and sub-board and committee meetings dates, agendas, meeting papers and minutes. (Papers will be published on the website five days before a scheduled meeting and the minutes will be published within 5 days after the meetings);
- The annual accounts of CWLEP;
- Delivery Plan;
- Information on how the CWLEP appraises and prioritises projects put forward for funding support;
- Prioritised list of projects;
- Regular programme and project updates on delivery and spend against budget;
- Code of Conduct for all staff and board members;
- Decisions of funding decisions made (covered in board, sub-board and committee meeting minutes);
- Whistle Blowing Policy;
- Register of interests and policy
- Statement from CWLEP Chair and CEO on the status of governance and transparency;
- Approved Business Cases;
- Project evaluations/appraisals;
- The updated Assurance Framework.

All major investment decisions will require approval through a majority vote by a quorate CWLEP Board. The process for how such decisions are made will be published on the CWLEP Website through this Assurance Framework.

Information on schemes promoted by Local Authority partners may be requested direct from the promoting organisations.

The CWLEP will ensure that it continues to engage members of the public and other key stakeholders in the development of its key strategies and investment priorities. The nature of this engagement will be set out on the CWLP website. The CWLEP will invite consultation responses from across all its communities to the initial Strategic Economic Plan and associated prioritisation process and draft programme before a final decision is taken. This would apply to any subsequent reviews of this process. The CWLEP will stipulate to scheme promoters that a full consultation strategy is required in the development and delivery of all schemes.

The CWLEP will publish annual financial statements covering the use of funding received from Government and programmes.

10. Annual Delivery plan

The LEP will publish an annual Delivery Plan which will set out the key activities the LEP expects to deliver that year in support of delivering the Strategic Economic Plan along with Key Performance Indicators in order that progress can be monitored. This will facilitate accountability and transparency.

The LEP will hold an annual general meeting and publish an annual report enabling stakeholders to hold the LEP to account and to understand how the LEP has performed against its Annual Delivery Plan.

11. Monitoring and review

This Assurance Framework is considered to be a live document. It is reviewed and updated on a periodic basis to reflect any changes to national / local circumstances and / or requirements, outside of the annual review.

The local assurance framework is published on the CWLEP website in accordance with National guidance.

PART 2: PROJECT PRIORITISATION

12. Introduction

The CWLEP's Strategy Programme Board has responsibility for maintaining and updating the CWLEP's Strategic Economic Plan and the strategic priorities and Enabling Programmes and Intervention Priorities which are identified in that plan. It has responsibility for developing a project pipeline (the 'Investment Plan') in conjunction with the other LEP sub-boards.

The CWLEP's Performance and Investment Committee has responsibility for scrutinising and ratifying projects put forward for funding from funding streams as they arise. The Committee also has responsibility for scrutinising performance of the delivery of the projects and programmes.

13. Strategic Fit

The Strategy Programme Board, working with the Local Transport Board, Growth corridor Board, Digital Connectivity Board, Employers and Skills Board and Business Growth Board is responsible for developing and maintaining a viable programme of projects and programmes which align to and support the CWLEP's strategic priorities. This pipeline of projects forms the basis of an Investment Plan which prioritises and lists the projects that the CWLEP wishes to secure investment for and identifies the funding streams for which those projects may be eligible.

The strategic priorities, enabling programmes and intervention priorities for the CWLEP are identified within its Strategic Economic Plan (supplemented by underpinning strategies) as agreed in consultation with its stakeholders. The CWLEP will only consider funding projects and programmes which support those strategic priorities and Enabling Programmes and Intervention Priorities.

The Strategy Programme Board will work with the CWLEP's key partners and stakeholders to identify potential interventions that may contribute to the overall stated ambition of achieving a £50 billion economy by 2040. These interventions could range from large scale transport schemes and projects to fully defined packages or programmes of measures that when combined, align with delivery of the CWLEP strategic objectives and offer the added value of a major scheme.

14. Project Assessment

Projects and programmes will be assessed and prioritised based using the Treasury Green Book Guidance. The key criteria are:

- **Strategic case** - Fit with the SEP (And LIS)
- **Economic Case** -Value for money Direct and Indirect impact of the scheme and: All schemes should have a Benefits Cost Realisation (BCR) of at least £2:£1 of LEP funding invested. Projects with BCR below this level will be considered on an exceptional basis.
- **Commercial Case** – that the deliverables can be specified, tendered and contracted in a package or packages of activities attractive to market
- **Management Case** - Deliverability within the timescales of the relevant funding stream.
- **Financial Case** – that there are sufficient financial resources available to fund the project and any requirements over the foreseeable medium term.

In addition projects and programmes will be expected to show how they meet sustainability and inclusivity criteria.

The Investment Plan will comprise projects that can be considered for a range of funding streams such as the Local Growth Fund, Growing Places Fund, Retained Business Rates and the replacement to ESIF funds. There is no minimum scheme cost threshold for projects seeking funding through the LEP, however given the level of input and information required when developing an appropriate business case, it is likely that projects seeking less than £100k will be discouraged unless they form part of programme of projects. Projects will need to ensure they satisfy any funding thresholds set for the individual funding streams for which they are considered. Incremental levels of project supporting information will be required to reflect project size and the scale of funding being requested. All projects will be required to demonstrate how they meet the five-case business case model. They will also have to demonstrate how they meet sustainability and inclusivity criteria as included in the updated business case template.

15. LEP Contribution

There is no fixed level of funding contribution to projects and programme from the CWLEP, however it is anticipated that CWLEP's contribution will not be above two thirds of the overall project cost. All project promoters will be expected to demonstrate that the funding they are seeking is the minimum level required for the project to be successfully delivered and confirm that other sources of funding are in place to cover the balance of project costs. The LEP can fund projects at higher intervention rate but only when there is a very strong business case in place and all other potential funding sources have been exhausted.

For transport projects supported through devolved major scheme funding, CWLEP's contribution will be capped at two thirds of the total scheme cost. There will be a mandatory requirement for the promoting organisation to fund at least one third of the total scheme cost or source from other funding streams.

For all projects, any cost increases incurred after Final Approval will be borne in full by the promoting organisation and the total project costs will be subject to review and challenge. Monitoring activity will require evidence of total project spend not just that relevant to the CWLEP intervention.

Generally, the CWLEP funding will only contribute towards the capital cost of the scheme. In certain circumstances the CWLEP may support applications which include an element of revenue support, but these will be dependent upon a prior indication from Government that they have revenue funding available. Revenue costs can be included as part of the project costs, but typically the LEP would expect these costs to be met by the promoting organisation.

16. Ensuring Value for Money

Value for money will typically be assessed using a benefit cost ratio (BCR). But with schemes at different stages of development and for non-transport schemes this may not be possible, so qualitative assessment techniques such as potential wider economic benefits may need to be used as an alternative.

As a general rule, schemes will be required to meet a minimum value for money threshold through demonstrating a BCR of over 2.0. The traditional BCR calculation does not capture all monetised costs and benefits of transport schemes. Therefore, other monetised and non-monetised benefits also need to be considered in coming to an overall judgement of the likely value for money of any particular scheme. In exceptional cases, the CWLEP will consider schemes with a BCR of less than 2.0 but which can demonstrate significant additional monetised or non-monetised benefits or innovations that are important in relation to delivering the stated strategic objectives.

An independent consultant will be required to calculate the BCR on projects put forward for funding and it is expected that the project sponsor will pay for this or as otherwise agreed.

17. Identification of Eligible Projects

The CWLEP will openly advertise funding opportunities detailing the call criteria which fit with the SEP and any requirements of the funding source. The calls will include a scoring matrix with weightings against each question to ensure that selection criteria are transparent and will include details of the scoring process and feedback arrangements.

The methodology will be proportionate to the funding being allocated and will be in line with established Government guidance including the HM Treasury Green Book. Typically, we would expect business cases to address, in a proportionate manner, the five cases set out in the Supplementary Guidance to the Green Book.

All applications will be scored separately by at least two members of staff before undergoing a moderation process with a third member of staff. These moderated scores will then be ranked and put forward to the Strategy Programme Board, or relevant other board as appropriate.

Once the prioritised list of projects is approved, all bidders will be provided with the moderated score of their bid and the ranking. If they haven't been awarded funding or invited through to the next stage of the selection process they will be given feedback on their bid. If a bidder would like to make a complaint about the decision they can do so by following the complaints process. The complaint must be lodged within 10 working days of receiving a funding decision. During this time other funding offers will be put on hold if necessary, so that adequate funding is reserved for the project for which the complaint has been received should that complaint be upheld, and the scores are revised.

18. Approval Process

All investment decisions using public funds will be made with reference to statutory requirements, conditions of the funding, local transport objectives and through formal LEP involvement.

The Strategy Programme Board will determine the funding criteria for new programmes as they arise and issue a call for projects. Initially applicants may only be asked to complete funding applications, expressions of interest or Outline Business cases. These will be scored and prioritised and this prioritised list presented to the LEP board for approval. The LEP board may also be asked to approve allocations to sub programmes, where a subsequent more detailed call process will be undertaken.

Projects that have received indicative approval will be invited to develop their proposals into an Outline Business Case or Full Business Case. As part of the assessment of business cases, the appraiser will use the Green Book business case checklist:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/190603/Green_Book_guidance_checklist_for_assessing_business_cases.pdf

For large projects (>£1m) it may be more appropriate for the promoting organisation to seek outline business case approval. This will enable the organisation to start claiming grant funding from the LEP to continue to develop the project up to an agreed limit. This funding will come from the amount requested in total for the project and will not be eligible for additional funding. A Full Business Case will be required following a tender process when the detailed costs are known and the final BCR has been determined.

All business cases for projects seeking more than £500k from the LEP will need to have an independent appraisal undertaken using a template provided by the LEP. For projects below £500k, LEP officers will undertake an evaluation of the project assessing its' fit with the five cases and the value for money.

For some projects there may be a requirement for the LEP to seek the views of a legal or technical expert. This opinion will be included/ summarised in the papers submitted to the board/sub-board as part of the approval process.

The business cases and appraisals will need to be considered by the relevant Sub-Board, and the LEP board if the value is greater than the delegated limit of the Sub-Board.

The Performance and Investment committee will review and ratify any and all projects approved by Sub-Boards for funding. The role of P&I will be to ensure that the project complies with the Assurance Framework process, that the appraisal of the project is robust and that appropriate grant conditions are included as part of the approval.

The call process, scoring and subsequent approval of projects along with any amendments will be recorded in the minutes of the relevant meeting so that the decision-making process is transparent. All minutes relating to funding decisions will be on the LEP website.

LEP Board, sub-board, committee members and LEP officers are all committed to making objective decisions and recommendations on merit based on the information provided through the application process and subsequent clarification. They will be provided with the following information based on the funding request in order to facilitate an informed decision:

Projects less than £25k	£25k- £100k	£100k+
Completed application form based on agreed criteria which must include a value for money assessment	Business Case Light	Outline Business Case Full Business case
	Internal Appraisal including BCR calculation	Independent Appraisal including BCR calculation
		Legal Opinion if required
Officer paper detailing recommendation proposed conditions.	Officer paper detailing recommendation proposed conditions.	Officer paper detailing recommendation proposed conditions.

The person responsible for providing the final sign-off on all funding decisions is the LEP CEO. This may be delegated to officers, but the avoidance of doubt, all funding decisions will first have had to be approved by the board and or/a sub board and ratified by P&I.

19. Time-Critical or Emergency Decisions

If there is a critical timescale that needs to be met, or circumstances are such that the LEP is effectively responding to an economic emergency, e.g. Banking Crisis, Lockdown, Local Business Failure, or if circumstances prevent the processes following normal procedures, funding decisions can be taken by correspondence, as long as the majority of board/sub-board members approve the proposal. In the case of the sub-boards, at least one board member will need to approve the proposal as part of that majority. Any funding decisions taken outside of the normal routine of meetings, the dates of which are published, shall also be recorded in the minutes of the next available meeting, thus ensuring public transparency.

20. Failure to follow process and procedures

Failure of a project to follow the processes set in this Assurance Framework will void any investment decision.

21. Contract and monitoring process

Following approval and ratification of funding decisions, grant funding offers, signed by either the Finance and Commercial Director, Chief Executive or Deputy Chief Executive will be issued to project sponsoring organisations along with the following:

- LEP and Northern Powerhouse logos and branding guidelines
- Monthly monitoring report template
- Quarterly claim form
- Audit letter template

All projects during the delivery of the project will be required to submit monthly monitoring forms and quarterly claim forms for the lifetime of the project including the reporting of agreed outputs, post completion of physical projects. Projects are also required to submit independent audit letters each annually to verify the costs against which the funding has been claimed.

Project progress will be reported at the relevant sub-board and to P&I. Failure to meet the grant offer letter terms, including spending within the agreed timescales and delivering the agreed outputs and outcomes may result in the funding being reduced, withdrawn or claimed back.

22. Project and Programme Business Case Appraisal

The CWLEP Executive, led by the Chief Executive, has responsibility for Business Case scrutiny and for making recommendations to the relevant Sub-Board with delegated approval limits. External independent experts are appointed to appraise, as required, project and programme Business Cases submitted for funding to the CWLEP. The Scheme Business Case assessment and the Value for Money Statement will be recommended by the Executive for approval by the Accountable Body's Section 151 Officer and the Performance and Investment Committee.

To remove the potential for conflicts of interest, CWLEP and CEC ensure that the nominated officer responsible for scheme assessment is not part of any team promoting a scheme. Where a conflict arises, this is identified and dealt with in accordance with existing procedures.

To ensure the required expertise for Business Case scrutiny the CWLEP appoints specialist consultants, as appropriate, to scrutinise a Business Cases. This avoids the CWLEP having to develop this capability and capacity in-house at considerable cost.,. Experts may include legal advice if required, on considerations such as the risk of challenge and non-compliance, state-aid and contract law. Advice to mitigate risk will also be sought and included in the business cases.

For significant sized schemes the independent consultants would be engaged to provide early advice to the promoting organisation to assist determination of the proportional appraisal requirements for any particular scheme. This will likely occur at a scoping meeting with the promoting authority on the requirements of the Business Case submission. This intervention will help focus effort and investment to facilitate efficiency in the development of the scheme Business Case.

23. Policy on Dealing with Scheme Changes

If a project, after approval for funding by a Sub-Board, is deemed to have a material change it will be returned to the relevant sub-board for approval of the change and then to the Performance and Investment Committee for ratification. In the first instance all project changes should be notified to the programme management team.

For the avoidance of doubt, funding cannot be carried forward from one year to the next without the LEPs express approval. Any funding not spent in compliance with terms detailed in the offer letters may be lost.

24. Risk Management

The CWLEP Executive is responsible for actively and regularly identifying and managing risks to the delivery of the projects and programmes for which the CWLEP is responsible for. The LEP Chief Executive is responsible for ensuring that this is carried out in a transparent and robust manner.

The LEP's approach to risk management is to:

- Ensure effective Corporate Governance through actively managing risk and reducing or transferring risk where appropriate;
- Protect, manage and improve business performance;
- Safeguard the LEP's assets, reputation and staff;
- Avoid and or reduce unnecessary and unforeseen liabilities and costs;
- Maximise opportunities and performance;
- promote a risk aware culture; and
- encourage the taking of calculated risks in pursuit of opportunities that benefit the LEP and the achievement of its strategic priorities.

The person responsible for risk management at the LEP is Rebecca Luck, Programme Manager who meets monthly with the CEO and Commercial and Finance Director to discuss corporate risks. Further meetings help project leads to identify and manage project and programme level risks.

The top 5 corporate and programme risks are reported to the Performance and Investment Committee at each meeting for consideration. The committee may require project sponsors to present to them on the mitigation measures proposed to address the key risks highlighted. Specific conditions on restrictions to funding may be imposed if so required. Significant risks may be escalated to the CWLEP Board if appropriate, such as where the risk could result in a significant impact for the LEP, and the mitigation measures are limited or outside of the LEP control. The corporate risk register is also reviewed by the Finance and Audit Committee and, from time to time, by the main LEP Board.

25. Monitoring and Evaluation

The CWLEP has an agreed Monitoring and Evaluation plan (**Appendix A**) with Government which will cover the activities funded as part of the Growth Programme. This plan will be owned by the CWLEP Performance and Investment committee which will review progress against the plan at each of its meetings.

CWLEP will establish a requirement for promoting organisations to put in place an agreed programme of scheme monitoring, and evaluation proportionate to the funding being sought and in line with guidance issued by Government on Local Growth Fund project evaluation. Outline scheme monitoring and evaluation plans will be required as part of the Business Case submissions for Programme Entry with firm proposals required for Full Approval along with a firm commitment to fund the monitoring and evaluation programme. This requirement will not extend to non-CWLEP schemes, where the scheme promoters will have their own processes for post opening monitoring and evaluation.

A traffic light report will be presented each month to the Performance and Investment Committee. The report will include a short update on progress for each LGF and GPF project along with a Red, Amber or Green rating. When the P&I has approved the report it will be made available on the website so that members of the public can review the stage and status of projects.

26. Policy on Non-Compliance with Funding Offers and Conditions

There may be circumstances where an applicant fails to meet the conditions of a grant offer letter. In the first instance the LEP will work with the applicant to find a resolution or to reframe the conditions in such a manner that is acceptable to both the LEP and the applicant. If terms cannot be agreed or the project sponsor fails to meet the conditions after extended time periods, the LEP will decommit the funding approval, withdraw the funding offer and seek alternate projects.

There may be exceptional circumstances where the LEP seeks to recover some, or all the funding paid to an applicant such as where there has been under-performance, misrepresentation or non-compliance.

In circumstances where an issue has been uncovered, the Performance and Investment Committee will receive a report which will include:

- a. A description of the project/s where concerns have been identified
- b. The nature of the issues identified
- c. Relevant details including the amount of funding awarded and the sum at risk due to the concerns; and
- d. Where recovery of funds is considered, a legal opinion which sets out the legal basis for recovery and likelihood of success.

The issue and the proposed resolution will be reported to the LEP board for consideration and approval.

A clawback clause is included in Schedule 5 of all the grant offer letters. Support from CEC as accountable body will be sought to recover sums or if there is a conflict of interest, independent legal support will be procured.

CWLEP SCHEME OF DELEGATIONS

APPROVED by F&A COMMITTEE 9th September 2020

This schedule records where authority rests within the LEP for financial and non-financial decision making. No such schedule can be completely comprehensive, but this seeks to provide a framework through which other decisions may be resolved. Any project or expenditure which might be considered “novel” or “contentious” should be referred to the Chief Executive and / or the Finance and Commercial Director. For the avoidance of doubt “novel” is something that is particularly innovative or sets a new precedent, “contentious” is something that have particularly high reputational risk.

The schedule only identifies those responsible for the final ‘ratification’ stage of decision making, and not, for example, responsibility for formulating strategy, policy and budgets (which typically lie with Officers, Committees and Groups).

Glossary of acronyms

CE	Chief Executive
DCEO	Deputy Chief Executive
F&CD	Finance and Commercial Director
Chair	Chair of LEP Board
Deputy Chair	Deputy Chair of LEP Board

Department Budget Holders (Roles)

Communications and Marketing Director
Business and Innovation Director
Transport and Investment Director
CSC Growth Director
Head of Programmes
Director of Skills
Pledge Partnership Manager
Growth Hub Enquiry and Engagement Manager

Policy formulation

Approval of significant corporate policies	CE
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Recruitment and staffing

Authority to appoint replacement and additional posts (interim, secondments, permanent, temporary and agency) in line with Business Plan	CE
Authority to terminate employment, in line with company policy	CE / Chair
Authority to appoint/ terminate Chief Executive post, in line with company policy	LEP Board
Vary staff pay and conditions	Appointment & Remuneration Committee, as recommended by CE
Review and change, agree main features of terms and conditions of employment	Appointment & Remuneration Committee, as recommended by CE

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Approval of early retirement/Severance	A&R Committee, as recommended by CE <£50,000 A&R Committee, as recommended by CE & F&A if >£50,000.
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Accounting, Auditing and Banking

Approval of Annual Accounts	LEP Board, as recommended by F&A Committee
Appointment of Auditors	F&A Committee
Systems of internal financial management and control and accountability, including risk management and financial procedures	F&A Committee, as recommended by F&CD
Appointment of Accountants	F&A Committee, as recommended by F&CD
Appointment of Bank, opening bank accounts and designation of bank signatories	F&A Committee, as recommended by F&CD
Pre - Approval of credit card spend up above £500	F&CD
Authorisation of payment of salaries	F&CD or DCEO, payments set up by Voisey & Co
The maintenance of records, the security and regular reconciliation of petty cash	F&CD
To monitor the regulations on VAT, ensuring compliance	F&CD
To complete and submit the VAT returns.	F&CD
Ensure appropriate insurance cover is in place	F&CD

Budget setting

Approval of annual LEP budget	LEP Board, as recommended by F&A Committee
Approval of “in-year” changes to overall budget, e.g. expenditures exceeding plan, new programme funding received in year.	F&A Committee

Procurement*, Purchasing and Payment

Core Funding Form Authorisation	≤ £50,000 CE, DCEO, F&CD > £50,000 CE + Chair/ Deputy Chair/Director
Approval of Purchase Order or Invoice Above, £2,500 three written quotes must be obtained. For procurement above £10,000 in value, a tender process must be run. Where three quotes cannot be obtained, or a direct award is required, refer to the F&CD.	≤ £500 All staff ≤ £5,000 Department Budget Holder for own department only ≤ £25,000 one of DCEO, F&CD ≤ £50,000 CE > £50,000 CE + Chair/ Deputy Chair/Director
Approval of Expenses, Credit Card expenses	Department Budget Holder in accordance with Expenses policy.
Approval of Purchase Order for Capital Items e.g. Equipment, Computers, Investment in Office Space	As above and to include F&CD.
Signing leases and contracts (whole life value)	≤ £100,000 CE

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	> £100,000 CE + Chair/ Deputy Chair/Director
Bank signatories – cheques	≤ £500 1 signatory > £500 2 signatories DCEO/CE/Chair/Deputy Chair/Director
Business Internet Banking	≤ £100,000 per day – F&CD/DCEO/CE
Agreeing contracts which extend over 2years and with a value > £100,000	LEP Board following recommendation from F&A Committee

* Procurement must also comply with company procurement procedure and limits.

Legal

Initiation of Litigation Proceedings or appointment of lawyers in response to proceedings (e.g. contractual dispute, employment tribunal, judicial review)	CE
Signing of and amendments to funding contracts, partnership agreements, service level agreements	CE / DCEO / F&CD
Deeds of release of security, certificates of satisfaction, discharges	CE / DCEO / F&CD

Delegation to Board Sub-Committees

It is recommended that minutes of sub-committees record the decision whether or not a project is novel or contentious. Those that are, will need the approval of the full board.

Sub-Committee	Key Functions and Proposed Delegation	Level of Delegation
Strategy Programme Committee	The Strategy Programme Committee sets the overarching vision and strategy for economic growth in the Cheshire and Warrington LEP area (including sign off of the SEP, LIS, Growth deal, ESIF strategies), including identifying priorities for investment. The committee oversees the development of programmes and projects that seek to deliver the priorities set out in the Strategic Economic (SEP) and related strategies and, going forward, the Local Industrial Strategy (LIS). As long as proposed projects are in line with the objectives set out in overarching vision and strategy approved by the full LEP Board, then the committee has delegated authority to approve projects up to £2.5m.	£2.5m
Science and Growth Corridor Board	The Science and Growth Corridor Board is responsible for setting and overseeing the strategic direction and operational delivery of the Cheshire Science Corridor Enterprise Zone including reviewing and approving of all businesses cases for investment in the EZ and ratifying Business Rate Discount applications approved by the EZ Steering Group. EZ investment projects can vary between £500k up to c.£5m, but typically range between £1m-£2.5m. The annual EZ Investment Programme is to be approved by the LEP board and Strategy	£2.5m

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	Committee with the EZ Board having delegated authority to approved projects up to £2.5m.	
Local Transport Board	The main role of the Local Transport Board is to provide strategic direction to transport in the sub-region. Therefore, the spending decisions are limited to the deployment of consultancy spend. Significant capital investments are taken by Transport Authorities.	£500k
Employers' Skills & Education Board	<p>The Employers' Skills and Education Board works with other employers, local authorities, universities, colleges and other training providers to ensure that businesses in Cheshire and Warrington have the skills they need to grow and that all our residents have the skills they need to progress and play a full part in the economy.</p> <p>The Board, supported by the LEP Executive, will make investment decisions on skills and education up to £1million ensuring value for money and strategic fit with the LEP's Skills Strategy and local priorities. The Board will champion investment in skills and education and communicate effectively with the business community to advise on new developments and local opportunities.</p>	£1m
Business Growth Board	The Business Growth Board oversees the activities of the LEP focussed on supporting businesses in the sub-region and, in particular, SMEs. In addition, the remit extends to Inward Investment, initiatives driven by the Department of Industry and Trade and preparations for Brexit. On occasion, e.g. in response to Covid, the LEP has provided direct financial support in the form of grant schemes, hence a delegated authority of £500k..	£500k
Digital Connectivity Board	The remit of the Digital Connectivity Board is yet to be finalised and confirmed. The board has been established to support improving digital infrastructure in the sub-region, to promote digital inclusivity and to facilitate digital investment. Initially, a delegated limit of £500k has been provided for investments which will be identified as part of the Digital Infrastructure Plan	£500k
Performance and Investment	<p>The Performance and Investment Committee is a review committee, and no financial decisions can be taken without approval from P&I. It will review all financial decisions being made by other sub-committees and following consideration will either confirm final approval, or else revert the decision back to the full LEP Board depending on the delegated authority of the sub-committee, whose decision it is reviewing.</p> <p>The Committee also monitors the delivery, outputs and spend off the projects funded by the various programmes, ensures risk registers and mitigation strategies are in place and, when appropriate, brings projects at risk of non-delivery to the attention of the LEP full board with recommendations for action.</p>	N/A

APPENDIX A: CWLEP MONITORING AND EVALUATION PLAN

Our Approach to Monitoring and Evaluating of all programmes and projects managed by the LEP

One of the requirements of the Growth Deal, and a component of any good funding programme, is the development of an agreed Monitoring and Evaluation Plan covering the capital projects allocated Local Growth Funding.

The LEP Executive has been worked with the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (DBEIS) to agree a set of metrics for use in monitoring project progress and outputs. In addition, discussions have taken place around the development of an Evaluation Plan to measure the impact and outcomes of the programme.

In all cases evaluation should be proportionate and selective; taking into consideration the scale, value and scope of an intervention.

All projects will be required to provide monitoring information to the LEP on a monthly basis in the form of a “highlight report”. More in depth monitoring information will also be required on a quarterly basis to support financial claims.

The LEP and DBEIS have agreed that the preferred approach to evaluation will be to identify those projects which offer the greatest opportunity for others to gain learning from – in other words a focus on projects which are innovative or ‘non-standard’. In most cases it is assumed that ‘standard’ transport schemes will not be subject to any in depth evaluation as there is already a large body of material available demonstrating the qualitative impacts of such schemes.

The evaluation of all projects will be built in at the point of contracting the projects. The timing of the evaluations will vary but it will be clear to all projects that it needs to be done and they need to allow budget for it. Evaluation will generally follow one of three approaches: -

- Output evaluation
- Process evaluation
- Impact evaluation

These are outlined in more detail below. It should be noted that more than one approach may be applied to a given project.

Approach	Description
Output	This is a quantitative evaluation and will look at whether the project achieved what it set out to in terms of outputs, e.g. jobs created, floorspace developed, homes constructed. It will also include a measure of value for money for the outputs delivered.
Process	This is a qualitative evaluation and will consider whether projects were delivered as planned in terms of process. For instance in the case of a fund, was it set up in a way that allowed it to effectively and efficiently operate or were there issues that could be captured and used to improve future arrangements?
Impact	This is a quantitative and qualitative evaluation and will look at the overall difference a project has made to the local economy. These evaluations will be more in depth and generally be reserved for those projects which are novel or offer the greatest opportunity for others to gain learning from.

Our portfolio of programmes and projects are key in delivering the objectives of the LEP's Strategic Economic Plan including the ambition to grow our economy to £50bn a year by 2030. As such it is essential that all projects are evaluated and monitored at least against their stated business plan delivery targets to understand the contribution they have made.

We have adopted a flexible approach to evaluation reflecting our earlier stated aim of targeting where most learning will be gained. The rationale for this set out in the table below together with our proposed evaluation method and thoughts on how the findings will be disseminated.

Approach	Rationale	Method of Evaluation	Dissemination of Information
Impact	Appropriate for projects where they are deemed to be unique in their objectives; or innovative in their approach; or key learning points could be gained e.g. how would you deliver the project differently and what learning opportunities could be shared to shape similar projects in the future to say drive down costs, deliver more quickly or achieve better outcomes, reduce risks and or/improve quality.	Independent detailed evaluation commissioned and funded by the project sponsor.	CWLEP website; Case study presentations at stakeholder events/ LEP network/ CWLEP event
Process	Appropriate for projects which were more reliant on an up-front process to drive delivery to evaluate whether the way the process was operated was both effective and efficient to share best practice and lessons learnt.	Independent detailed evaluation commissioned and funded by the project sponsor.	CWLEP website; Case study presentations at stakeholder events/ LEP network/ CWLEP event
Output	Appropriate for projects where standard methodology in place for appraising project or where transport related standard metrics apply.	Normal monthly project monitoring reports submitted to the LEP	CWLEP website

We will agree with Projects Sponsors the evaluation approach to be adopted for their projects, and how this will be achieved including commissioned of independent detailed evaluations where appropriate.

The key metrics that will be monitored and evaluated will be finalised as part of each funding offer letter, together with the proposed method of their evaluation approach where an impact or process method has been identified. Normal monitoring and evaluation at an output level will be collated as part of the normal regular monitoring of the project as it progresses through its delivery phase. It is intended that the monitoring period for each project is for a period of seven years commencing on the date that the final grant offer letter is signed by the LEP. Once final offer letters are agreed and signed, the specific metrics for each project, types of evaluations and the methods for collecting the evidence and results identified will be confirmed and more detail provided.

APPENDIX B: EXPRESSION OF INTEREST TEMPLATE

CHESHIRE & WARRINGTON ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP

PROJECT FUNDING - EXPRESSION OF INTEREST

The purpose of this Expression of Interest (Eoi) is to provide Cheshire and Warrington LEP with sufficient information to determine whether or not a project is one that, in principle, it wishes to consider for future investment. Funding is awarded on a competitive basis and as such the LEP has to ensure that it is presenting a compelling case to Government and that the projects it submits show a clear rationale and well-defined benefits. Projects that pass the Eoi stage will have to submit further outline and full business cases for a rigorous due diligence appraisal. Once final decisions are taken by the LEP applicants will be informed of the outcome. Passing the Eoi stage puts you onto the LEP's Programme pipeline but in no way guarantees that your project will be supported.

Please complete the form as fully as possible ensuring that all information requested is included.

Where additional information is requested, such as location maps or Gantt charts, please supply these as separate documents or files, rather than attempting to embed them within this form.

Note that all project proposals must align to the priorities identified within the LEP's Strategic Economic Plan.

On completion, please return the form to Rebecca Luck at: Rebecca.Luck@871candwep.co.uk

Section A: Project Summary	
Project Name	
Brief description of the project	Brief description of the project
Location	Name and address of the scheme/site (Please attach location map with development site boundaries clearly marked). If possible please highlight existing transport infrastructure and other points of particular interest to the bid e.g. development sites, areas of existing employment, constraints, etc.
Type of Scheme	Please indicate the type of scheme being submitted
	<input type="checkbox"/> Transport infrastructure
	<input type="checkbox"/> Regeneration
	<input type="checkbox"/> Enabler
	Other (please specify):

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Programme Funding	Please specify which LEP core funding programme that your project could be eligible for?
Total Project Cost	£
Amount of LEP Core Programme Funding Requested	£ Percentage [] of total project costs
Section B: Applicant Details	
Project Applicant	Including named contact, organisation and address (including registered office if applicable)
Accountable Body (if different from above)	Including named contact, organisation and registered office address
Section C: Project Details	
Existing Site	Brief description of site including area and existing uses. Is the site in an Enterprise Zone or an Assisted Area – please give details.
Environmental or heritage issues	Is the site designated greenfield or brownfield? Does the project impact on a site of environmental or heritage value? If so, please give details.
Planning Status	Does the project have planning consent? If so, please attach a copy.
Timescales	What is the expected start and completion date of the project?
Constraints of the Site and to Delivery	Are there any issues/factors (non-financial) that may prevent the scheme from starting on site? Have any mitigation measures been implemented or planned to address these?
Alignment to Strategic Economic Plan and National Policies	Please select which strategic priorities the scheme aims to support. Please select all categories that apply.
	<input type="checkbox"/> Atlantic Gateway <input type="checkbox"/> Cheshire Science Corridor <input type="checkbox"/> Crewe High Growth City <input type="checkbox"/> Enablers. Please specify - <input type="checkbox"/> Other(s), Please specify –
	Please provide evidence of how your proposal also aligns with and supports relevant National policies or initiatives.

Potential number of jobs, floorspace and/or houses created	Potential project outputs in terms of net additional housing/employment floorspace and any other outputs. Please estimate the number of direct and indirect jobs to be created and state how this has been calculated.
Growth in GVA	Please provide an estimate of the Impact of your scheme in growth of Gross Value Added, indicating how this estimate has been arrived at
Partners	<p>Please provide details of the partnership bodies (if any) you plan to work with in the design and delivery of the proposed scheme. This should include a short description of the role and responsibilities of the partnership bodies.</p> <p>Please provide specific information on any private sector partners.</p>
Risks	Please describe the principal risks (and risk mitigation) associated with your project. These could include: Planning; political; commercial; land ownership; legislative; procurement; policy; management; etc.

Section D: Funding Details																																																																																							
Scheme Costs	<p>Before putting forward a Project proposal for potential funding, Project promoters should ensure they understand the financial implications of developing the Project (including any implications for future resource spend and ongoing costs relating to maintaining and operating the asset), and the need to secure and underwrite any necessary funding outside the LEP contribution.</p> <p>Please provide details of a funding profile (by year) for the Project in terms of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total annual cost • LEP core funding sought; • Promoting Organisation contributions; • Third Party contributions (public and private). <p>If applicable please show capital and revenue costs as separate lines. <i>You may attach the funding profile as a separate annex if required.</i></p> <p>Total Project Cost:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>£'000</th> <th>Year 1</th> <th>Year 2</th> <th>Year 3</th> <th>Year 4</th> <th>Year 5</th> <th>Future</th> <th>Total</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Capital</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Revenue</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Capital Funded By:</p> <table border="1"> <tbody> <tr> <td>Promoter</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>LEP</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Other</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>Revenue Funded By:</p> <table border="1"> <tbody> <tr> <td>Promoter</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>LEP</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>Other</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>							£'000	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Future	Total	Capital								Revenue								Total								Promoter								LEP								Other								Promoter								LEP								Other							
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Promoting Organisation Contributions	Please provide a commentary on your commitment to spend. Any cost increases incurred after Final Approval will be borne in full by the promoting organisation.																																																																																						
Third Party Contributions and Leverage	Please provide further details on any third-party contributions for your project. This should include evidence to show how any third-party contributions are being secured, the level of commitment and when they will become available. Please include contributions of cash and in-kind (e.g. land and buildings). Also provide information on any additional resources that your project will leverage in, as a result of the initial investment.																																																																																						

Section E: Additional Information	
Supporting Information	Please include any additional facts which may assist the Local Enterprise Partnership to assess this Scheme against strategic fit and deliverability.
Evaluation	Please provide details of how you propose to evaluate the success of the project.

APPENDIX C: BUSINESS CASE TEMPLATE



BUSINESS CASE TEMPLATE

Version 4

September 2020

1. Business case format

In order for the Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) to appraise funding proposals, all Promoting Organisations applying for funding from the LEP are required to complete this Business Case. The template is based on the Government's Green Book appraisal process and allows for a transparent, robust and consistent assessment of all applications for funding over £100k.

This template should be completed in accordance with the guidelines laid down in the HM Treasury's Green Book. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-green-bookappraisal-and-evaluation-in-central-government>

For projects seeking less than £100k, there is a "business case light" which should be used.

The form comprises seven sections: -

- A: Project Overview
- B: Strategic Case
- C: Economic Case
- D: Financial Case
- E: Management Case
- F: Commercial Case
- G: Sustainability and Inclusivity Case
- H: Evidence and Supporting Information

Please complete the form as fully as possible ensuring that all information requested is included. If there are elements that you are not yet in a position to complete please indicate clearly when this information will be available.

Where additional information is requested, such as location maps or Gantt charts, please supply these as separate documents or files, rather than attempting to embed them within this form.

Additional information may be requested for projects seeking funding from specific streams. Details will be provided in the call for projects.

Note that all project proposals must align to the priorities identified within the LEP's Strategic Economic Plan.

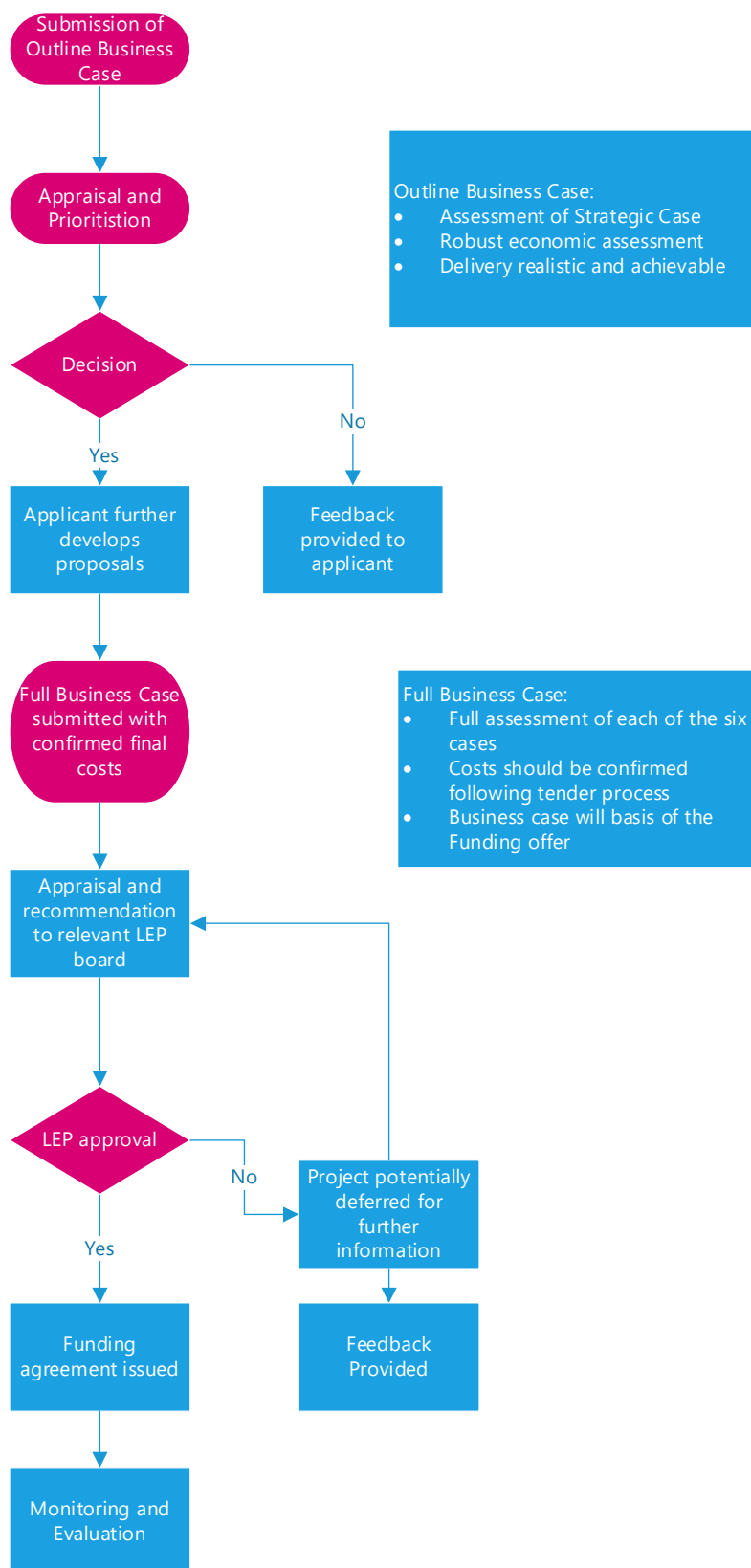
As part of the assessment of the business cases the appraisers will use the Green Book Business case checklist:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/190603/Green_Book_guidance_checklist_for_assessing_business_cases.pdf

Please refer to this when completing your business case.

On completion, please return the form to the LEP as instructed in the call process which will be published on the LEP website.

2. Decision Making Process



Section A: Project Overview

This section asks you for basic information on your Project, including a brief description, type of Project, Project location and contact details for further information.

A1: Project Name	
A2: Promoting Organisation	<p><i>Name of Organisation:</i></p> <p><i>If you are delivering the project in conjunction with delivery partners, please also include the name of the organisation and the name and contact details of the main lead from that organisation:</i></p> <p><i>Delivery Partner details:</i></p>
A3. Accountable Body	<p><i>Please provide details of the project's Accountable Body (if different from the Promoting Organisation)</i></p>
A4: Contact Details	<p><i>Please provide BOTH the contact details for the project manager and for the person who will be responsible for signing the contract if a grant offer is made:</i></p> <p><i>Project Manager:</i> <i>Name:</i> <i>Tel:</i> <i>Email:</i></p> <p><i>If offered a grant, please confirm the name and role of the person who will sign the contract, along with the registered company address:</i> <i>Name:</i> <i>Role:</i> <i>Registered company address:</i></p>

A9: Proposed start and finish dates	<p><i>Please state when you intend to start the project, the duration and the proposed finish date. In the management case you will be asked to provide more detailed milestones:</i></p> <p>Proposed start date: Duration: Proposed Finish date:</p> <p>Please ensure you have noted any specific deadlines associated with the funding you are applying for and that the project can be delivered within these timescales.</p> <p><i>You should allow a minimum of 3 months from the submission of your application for a funding decision.</i></p>
A8: Project location	<p><i>Please provide a short description of area covered by the Project (in no more than 100 words)</i></p> <p><i>Please supply a location map and where possible a map showing the site boundary (and Map info Table(s) where available). If possible please highlight existing transport infrastructure and other points of particular interest to the bid e.g. development sites, areas of existing employment, constraints etc.</i></p>
A9: Project Type	<div> <input type="checkbox"/> Transport <input type="checkbox"/> Skills and Innovation <input type="checkbox"/> Energy and Environmental <input type="checkbox"/> Regeneration <input type="checkbox"/> Business Support <input type="checkbox"/> Life Science <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial Space <input type="checkbox"/> Housing <input type="checkbox"/> Other- Please state: </div>
A10: State aid	<p><i>It is the applicant's responsibility to confirm that any grant offered would be state-aid compliant.</i> Further advice can be found here: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/state-aid</p> <p>Please state whether the grant if offered would be state-aid compliant and the basis for your assumption:</p>

B: Strategic Case

This section should set out in more detail the rationale for making the investment and evidence on the strategic fit of the Project.

B1: Policy Fit	<i>Please state how the project fits with Local, Regional and National Policies:</i>
B2: Need for intervention	<i>What are the current problems or market failures to be addressed by your Project? Describe any economic, transport, skills, environmental, social problems or opportunities which will be addressed by the Project. Please provide quantitative examples of how the problems will be addressed by your Project.</i> (Limit: 1 side of A4).
B3: Objectives of the project	<i>What is the project seeking to achieve and what are the current arrangements?</i>
B4: Future LEP Challenges / Opportunities Addressed by Project	<i>Are there any problems you have identified that will occur in the future that your Project is intended to address? (e.g. congestion, road safety, access to services and opportunities, skills shortages, climate change etc.).</i> (limit: 1 side of A4)
B5: Wider Geographic Impact	<i>Please provide information on any potential impacts the project may have outside of Cheshire and Warrington, for instance does it involve partnership working with another LEP or organisation, is it a pilot which could be rolled out nationally. You should indicate those areas that will directly benefit, areas that will indirectly benefit and those areas that may be impacted adversely. Please provide as Map info layer if possible.</i>
B6: Fit with other projects and programmes	<i>Does the project fit with any other projects or programmes and if so how and how will you ensure maximum alignment and benefit?</i>

C: Economic Case

This section should set out the case for the Project in supporting and accelerating the economic growth of Cheshire & Warrington. It is important that the benefits provided by the proposed project take account of issues including deadweight and displacement and as such benefits and outputs should be shown as net.

C1: Proposed project Outputs	<p><i>Please state the proposed direct and indirect outputs expected to be generated by the project and how you have calculated these. We will require outputs to be monitored for a minimum of five years unless otherwise agreed.</i></p> <p>Method of output calculation:</p>																																																															
<p>Proposed Outputs (outputs shown are only examples, please add outputs appropriate to your project)</p> <table border="1"><thead><tr><th>Output</th><th>Year 1</th><th>Year 2</th><th>Year 3</th><th>Year 4</th><th>Year 5</th><th>Total</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>Jobs Created</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td>GVA (£m per year)</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Learners benefitting</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Businesses receiving support</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td>New commercial Floorspace</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Length of new road created (Km)</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Public Match Funding</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Private Match Funding</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td></tr></tbody></table> <p>Please state whether other funding partners require you to report outputs, so that they can be appropriately proportioned between funding sources and to prevent double counting</p>		Output	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Total	Jobs Created							GVA (£m per year)							Learners benefitting							Businesses receiving support							New commercial Floorspace							Length of new road created (Km)							Public Match Funding							Private Match Funding						
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C2: Wider benefits of the project	<p><i>Please describe the expected benefits of the project and how these will be measure e.g. improved travel times, unlocking land for development, reduce Co2 emissions, reduce car use, improved educational attainment, increase in businesses attracted to Cheshire and Warrington etc.</i></p> <p><i>Benefits:</i></p> <p><i>How the benefits will be measured:</i></p>																																																															

C4: Value for Money	<p><i>As set out in the LEP's Assurance Framework we are required to assess the value for money of projects using a Benefit Cost Realisation (BCR) calculation.</i></p> <p>This calculation will need take into account the net benefits of the project, discounting deadweight and leakage. It is recommended that you seek the help of an economist if you are not able to make this calculation yourself. The LEP requires projects to have a BCR of £2:£1 but will consider projects with lower values by exception.</p> <p>BCR:</p>
C5: Options Assessment	<p><i>Please describe what alternative delivery options and funding sources have been considered and why these have been rejected. Also please detail the options considered for delivering the project at different scales and why these options have been rejected. How have you prioritised the options considered in order to reach an optimal solution?</i></p>
C6: Contingency Planning	<p><i>If LEP monies are not available for your Project, do you have a contingency plan for this Project? If your answer is 'no' please comment on the potential impacts of this Project not being implemented.</i></p>

D: Financial Case

This section requires you to demonstrate how the project will be financed

D1: Project Costs	<p><i>Please detail the total project costs including, development costs, post completion maintenance costs and evaluation.</i></p> <p><i>Please provide details of a funding profile (by year) for the Project in terms of:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Total annual cost</i>• <i>LEP funding sought</i>• <i>Promoting Organisation contributions</i>• <i>Third Party contributions (public and private).</i> <p><i>If applicable please show capital and revenue costs as separate lines.</i> <i>You may attach the funding profile as a separate annex if required.</i></p>
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The headings below are a guide only. Please amend to reflect the proposed project. However, all projects above £100k are required to have a budget for post project evaluation and all projects will be required to submit an independent audit report annually for the duration of the project.

If you are unsure whether a cost can be capitalised please take appropriate advice. In most instances, the LEP funding will only be able to be used for capital costs.

	Year 1 (£k)	Year 2 (£k)	Year 3 (£k)	Year 4 (£k)	Year 5 (£k)	Future Years (£k)	Total (£k)
Capital							
Development Costs							
Project Management							
Surveys							
Equipment							
Construction							
Legal							
Project Appraisal							
Total Capital							
Revenue							
Maintenance							
Staff time							
Subscriptions							
Post project Evaluation							
Annual Audits							
Total Revenue							
Total Cumulative Project costs							

D2: Promoting Organisation Contributions	<i>Please provide detail of your contribution to the project and whether this has been secured and whether there are dependencies</i>
	<i>Project promoters must demonstrate that they can commit a minimum contribution fund of at least one third of the total Project cost. The LEP grant will be fixed, any cost increases incurred after Final Approval will be borne in full by the promoting authority. If the project costs fall below the approved level, then the LEP grant will reduce pro-rata.</i>

D3: Third Party Contributions and Leverage	<i>Please provide further details on any third-party contributions for your Project. This should include evidence to show how any third-party contributions are being secured, the level of commitment and when they will become available. Please include contributions of cash and in-kind (e.g. land and buildings). Also provide information on any additional resources that your project will leverage in as a result of the initial investment.</i>
D4: Calculation of costs	<p><i>How have your costs been calculated? What risk allowance has been applied to the project cost (e.g. QRA / Optimism Bias, Contingency)?</i></p> <p><i>How will cost overruns be dealt with? How will these costs be shared with any third-party funding partners?</i></p> <p><i>Are the final costs of the project known? And if not, when will they be known. The BCR will need to be recalculated when the final costs are confirmed (i.e. post tender)</i></p>
D5: Project Income	<i>If the project likely to generate and income? If so, please provide the details below along with the assumptions (please note that any income should be recorded in the outputs section in C2)</i>

E: Management Case – Delivery

This section is asking you to explain the proposed management and delivery arrangements

E1: Current Project Status	<i>Please state Project status e.g. Is the Project at the conceptual stage? Has a business case been developed? What, if any, internal and external approvals does it require? Is the project reliant on external funding? If so, has a bid for funding been submitted/ was it successful?</i>																																							
E2: Delivery Plan	<p><i>Please provide a Project programme and phasing showing key activities and milestones. (Please note these are only indicative and you should tailor the table to your own project)</i></p> <table border="1"><thead><tr><th>Milestone</th><th>Start</th><th>Finish</th></tr></thead><tbody><tr><td>Agree scope of project</td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Stakeholder Consultation</td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Options analysis</td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Develop Business case</td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Appraisal of business case</td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Secure Funding</td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Procurement process/es</td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Issues Contract</td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Project start</td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Monitoring and report</td><td></td><td>Ongoing</td></tr><tr><td>Project finish</td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Post project evaluation</td><td></td><td></td></tr></tbody></table>	Milestone	Start	Finish	Agree scope of project			Stakeholder Consultation			Options analysis			Develop Business case			Appraisal of business case			Secure Funding			Procurement process/es			Issues Contract			Project start			Monitoring and report		Ongoing	Project finish			Post project evaluation		
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E3: Project Dependencies	<p><i>Please detail any project dependencies e.g. planning permission required, funding approval required, land purchase etc. along with expected completion dates:</i></p> <table border="1" data-bbox="486 327 1439 528"> <tr> <th><i>Dependency</i></th> <th><i>Date expected to complete</i></th> </tr> <tr> <td><i>e.g. planning permission</i></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td><i>Internal Approval</i></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	<i>Dependency</i>	<i>Date expected to complete</i>	<i>e.g. planning permission</i>		<i>Internal Approval</i>					
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<i>Internal Approval</i>											
E3: Other Partners Involved in Project Delivery	<p><i>Please provide details the roles of any delivery partners, the status of the commitment to the projects and any fees involved, along with how they will be paid.</i></p>										
E4: Project Governance	<p><i>Please provide the proposed project management structure and what experience you have of delivery similar projects. Please also detail ongoing management arrangements e.g. monthly project board meetings:</i></p>										
E5: Stakeholder consultation and Engagement	<p><i>Please detail what stakeholder engagement you have undertaken. How will you deal with any objections? How will you keep stakeholder updated and engaged during the delivery of the scheme? Letters of support for the project should be appended.</i></p>										
E6: Risk management	<p><i>Please detail your approach to risk management:</i></p> <p><i>Please detail the top 5 risks and issues and how you are managing these. If available, please append the project risk register</i></p>										
E7: Monitoring and Evaluation	<p><i>Please detail proposed arrangements for monitoring progress of the project and post project evaluation. The LEP requires that the evaluations are paid for by the applicant and made publicly available, including on the LEP website.</i></p>										

F: Commercial Case

This section details how the project will be procured, and risks managed.

F1: Products and Services	What goods and or services are being procured?																					
F2: Procurement processes	Please state how each key element of the project will be procured																					
F3: Procurement Timetable	<p>Please provide all the key milestones. The table below is an example and should be amended as required:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Milestone</th><th>Start</th><th>Finish</th></tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Establish what is required</td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr> <td>Draft Invitation to tender</td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr> <td>Issue tender</td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr> <td>Tender Period</td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr> <td>Tender evaluation</td><td></td><td></td></tr> <tr> <td>Contract award</td><td></td><td></td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Milestone	Start	Finish	Establish what is required			Draft Invitation to tender			Issue tender			Tender Period			Tender evaluation			Contract award		
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Tender evaluation																						
Contract award																						
F4: Value for Money	How will you ensure value for money?																					
F5: Procurement and contract management	<p>How will the procurement be managed and the subsequent management of the contract/s?</p> <p>If externally, please confirm that the costs for this have been secured and included in Section D.</p>																					

F6: Procurement Risks and issues	Please details steps you have taken to ensure there are appropriate supplier in the market that can deliver within the project timescales. Are there likely to be any supply issues and if so, how will you manage these:
F7: Asset Ownership	Who will own the assets when the project is complete? What if any are the proposals for assets disposal post project completion and have any costs associated with this been accounted for in section D?

G: Sustainability and Inclusivity

G1: Environmental Impact of the project	What steps have you taken to mitigate the environmental impact of the project? E.g. have you looked at the use of sustainable resources, lower carbon materials, how waste can be reduced etc:
G2: Carbon Savings	Will the project produce any carbon savings and if so how will these be achieved and how have they been calculated? Carbon Savings per annum: Basis of calculation: How they will be achieved:
G3: More efficient processes	Will the project make any resource savings? E.g. reduce water/energy consumption/ waste produced
G4: Innovation	Will there be any new/ innovative technology used to reduce the environmental impact of the project?
G5: Travel	Will the project reduce road mileage and or provide low carbon/ sustainable alternatives such as public transport, walking and cycling, car sharing, low emission vehicles, low carbon fuels and technologies? Will the project improve access to services and facilities for vulnerable or disadvantaged groups or individuals?
G6: Inclusivity	What steps are you taking to ensure inclusive growth (e.g. local labour clauses, use of SME)

G7: Workforce	Will the project provide employment opportunities for local people? Will it promote or support equal employment opportunities? Will it promote healthy working lives (including health and safety at work, work-life/home-life balance and family friendly policies)? Will it offer employment opportunities to disadvantaged groups and pay above living wage?
G8: Learning opportunities	Will the project offer any learning opportunities including engaging local schools and colleges?

H: Evidence and supporting information

H1: Evidence	<i>Please list here and provide copies of all technical reports documenting the evidence base for the Project and the Project's performance</i>
H2: Supporting Information	<i>Please include any additional facts which may assist the Local Enterprise Partnership to assess this Project against strategic fit and deliverability.</i>

APPENDIX D: TRANSPORT SCHEMES – VALUE FOR MONEY GUIDANCE

Value for Money

Local Enterprise Partnerships will need to be satisfied that the proposed schemes will achieve value for money.

Local Enterprise Partnerships will need to demonstrate that they have established processes to ensure that the modelling and appraisal is sufficiently robust and fit for purpose for the scheme under consideration. This should describe how they will ensure that the modelling and appraisal of schemes meets the guidance set out in WebTAG.

The use of WebTAG, which is mandatory for all schemes, does not preclude additional assessments or methodologies (e.g. wider economic benefits) being employed to prioritise and assess the overall business case for a scheme.

Neither does it dictate the weighting or importance that decision-makers should attach to any aspect of the WebTAG assessment or any additional assessment. In particular, the Benefit to Cost Ratio is only one component of the value for money assessment and should not be the sole driver of decision-making.

The overriding principle is that the full range of the material costs and benefits of a scheme, both quantified and unquantified, should be available to decision-makers.

Minimum requirements	<p>The modelling and appraisal of schemes contained in business cases must be developed in accordance with the guidance published in WebTAG at the time the business case is submitted to Local Enterprise Partnerships for approval.</p> <p>Central case assessments must be based on forecasts which are consistent with the definitive version of NTEM (DfT's planning dataset). This requirement doesn't stop Local Enterprise Partnerships considering alternative planning assumptions as sensitivity tests and considering the results of these in coming to a decision about whether to approve a scheme.</p> <p>The appraisal and modelling will be scrutinised by Local Enterprise Partnerships to ensure it has been developed in accordance with the WebTAG. This will be undertaken independent of the management unit or authority promoting the scheme. The Local Enterprise Partnership's local assurance framework will set out how this will be done.</p> <p>The local assurance framework must set out how the assessment and scrutiny of business cases will be quality assured.</p>
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Recommended	Set out mechanisms for providing early advice to scheme promoters on whether the study approach is fit-for-purpose, particularly in relation to modelling and Social & Distributional Impacts (which both can have significant lead times)
Optional	<p>A description of how Local Enterprise Partnerships will ensure that WebTAG will be applied by scheme promoters in a proportionate and robust way.</p> <p>A description of the circumstances under which external scrutiny or audit of the appraisal or modelling of schemes would be commissioned e.g. controversial or particularly costly schemes.</p>

Local Enterprise Partnerships will need to put in place a process for producing a Value for Money (VfM) statement for all schemes put forward for approval summarising their overall assessment of the economic case. This VfM statement will need to be reviewed and updated at each approval stage.

Minimum requirements	<p>A value for money statement for each scheme in line with published DfT WebTAG guidance and DfT advice on assessing VfM⁶ must be presented for consideration to Local Enterprise Partnerships at each approval stage.</p> <p>The VfM assessment must be signed off as true and accurate by a named officer with responsibility for Value for Money assessments within Local Enterprise Partnerships.</p>
Recommended	Set out what processes will be put in place to ensure that all impacts of a scheme (monetised and non-monetised) will be assessed by officers on a consistent basis and are based on reasonable assumptions.

Local Enterprise Partnerships will need to confirm that they agree to only approve schemes that meet a minimum VfM threshold and put in place the appropriate checks and balances to ensure compliance with this requirement.

The overwhelming majority of local major schemes funded in recent years were assessed by the Department as offering at least “high” value for money.

We would like to ensure that the value for money of major transport investment is maintained and therefore would expect that Local Enterprise Partnerships would only in exceptional circumstances agree to fund schemes with lower than “high” value for money.

If Local Enterprise Partnerships wish to retain the flexibility to fund schemes assessed at less than “high” value for money, the assurance framework should clearly set out the

⁶ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/value-for-money-advice-for-local-transport-decision-makers>

circumstances under which funding for such schemes would be considered, and outline any additional scrutiny or conditions that would apply.

Minimum requirements	<p>Local Enterprise Partnerships must either; only approve schemes that offer at least “high” value for money, as assessed using DfT guidance, or; set out the limited circumstances under which schemes offering lower than “high” value for money would be considered.</p> <p>Schemes must be assessed against the relevant thresholds at each approval stage.</p>
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Local Enterprise Partnerships are required to demonstrate separately (in other sections of the assurance framework) that they are transparent and open when reporting the results of modelling and appraisal, and that they have plans in place to obtain the necessary resources to fulfil the requirement to secure Value for Money.

External views on business cases

This section should outline what arrangements exist for Local Enterprise Partnerships to invite and consider any external comment and/or scrutiny of business cases prior to approval. In previous DfT guidance, bidding Local Authorities were required to place their business case on their own websites when bids were submitted for funding and that practice should continue.

Minimum requirements	<p>Business cases must be published (and publicised) before funding approval decision is made so that external comment is possible.</p> <p>Opinions expressed by the public and stakeholders must be available to relevant members or boards of Local Enterprise Partnerships when decisions are being taken.</p>
Recommended	<p>The above period should be at least 3 months.</p> <p>Local Enterprise Partnerships should make public how they have taken external comments into account</p>

Evaluation and Monitoring

The following requirements on the evaluation and monitoring of **outcomes** apply to all transport schemes.

Minimum requirements	<p>Local Enterprise Partnerships must put in place mechanisms to ensure that schemes are monitored and evaluated in line with the latest DfT guidance⁷ on the evaluation of local major schemes. In particular Local Enterprise Partnerships should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • set out proportionate evaluation and monitoring (M&E) plans that clarify: 1) requirements for individual schemes including funding of M&E activities; 2) responsibility for undertaking M&E, how minimum standards will be met and timescales for completion and decisions. • ensure that, for each scheme, there is clarity about how spend against delivery of outputs will be reported. • ensure that M&E plans are in place for schemes by the time that funding is signed off or before any data collection is programmed. • put in place processes to ensure that the results of any evaluation and monitoring are published.
Recommended	<p>Local Enterprise Partnerships should have the results of any evaluation and monitoring reviewed independently of the scheme promoter.</p> <p>Local Enterprise Partnerships should prepare an evaluation ‘handover pack’ as part of the appraisal process that documents all key assumptions so that those responsible for scheme evaluation can fully understand how appraisal estimates were produced and can examine the potential drivers of any differences between forecasts and outturns.</p>
Optional	<p>Set out how Local Enterprise Partnerships will share best practice obtained from evaluation and monitoring reports.</p>

Local Enterprise Partnerships and scheme promoters should refer to published DfT frameworks for advice on monitoring outcomes (e.g. reducing congestion, improving journey reliability etc.) measures, data collection methods and potential data sources.⁸

⁷ <http://www.dft.gov.uk/publications/evaluation-local-major-schemes>

⁸ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/35975/lstf-monitoring-evaluation-framework.pdf;
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/301284/bba-monitoring-and-evaluation-framework.pdf;
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/monitoring-and-evaluation-framework-for-local-authority-major-schemes>

APPENDIX E: PROCUREMENT POLICY

Procedure Title: Procurement Procedure	Ref:
Author: Rachel Brosnahan	Date: April 2018 v1
Review date: April 2018	Version 1

This procurement policy supersedes the Procurement Procedures document dated November 2016

Purpose

The aim of this policy is to provide clear guidance to staff on what process to follow when procuring goods or services.

Scope

As a private sector company in receipt of public monies Cheshire & Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership (CWLEP) will ensure as a matter of best practice that procurement of goods and services follows UK and European public procurement legislation and guidelines.

Background

The over-riding procurement policy requirement is that all public procurement must be based on value for money, defined by Government as “the best mix of quality and effectiveness for the least outlay over the period of use of the goods or services bought”. This should be achieved through competition, unless there are compelling reasons to the contrary.

Public sector procurement is subject to a legal framework which encourages free and open competition and value for money, in line with internationally and nationally agreed obligations and regulations. Some general principles of law have emerged from the case law of the European Court of Justice. The most important of these general principles of law for you to be aware of in the procurement context are:

- equality of treatment
- transparency
- mutual recognition
- proportionality

The Public Contracts Regulations (PCR) 2015 took effect in February 2015 and were designed to deregulate and simplify the rules for procuring goods and services. If you are buying supplies, services or works using public monies and which is above the applicable OJEU thresholds you must follow the procedures laid down in the Public Contracts Regulations before awarding a contract to suppliers. Otherwise, you must adhere to the Treaty of Rome principles set out above.

Procedure

When considering which procurement procedure to follow you need to consider the aggregate value of those goods or services you are likely to buy over a 12-month period. For example, if you need to legal support on a project, you shouldn't just look at the cost of that specific legal support but the total aggregated value of legal support the LEP is likely to need over a 12-month year period or the proposed length of the contract. The value of contracts should not be disaggregated to avoid any applicable thresholds.

1 Procurement Process

- 1.1 For purchases over £1000 a LEP Funding Request and Authorisation Form should be completed, and the appropriate level of authorisation obtained.
- 1.2 Once the LEP Funding Request and Authorisation form has been completed, the Officer must comply with CWLEP procurement procedure, which may mean undertaking a competitive tender process or single tender justification. The table below shows information linked to values and spend.

Value of Goods/ Services	Minimum Number of Quotations or Tenders to be Obtained
Over £1000 - £2500	3 informal quotations obtained and recorded to confirm best use of funding (telephone/internet)
Over £2500 - £10,000	3 written quotations (email is fine)
£10,000+	3 formal tenders using the Invitation to tender documentation

- 1.3 Competitive Tender Process (CTP) is required on all goods or services procured above £2,500 except where exemptions apply as detailed in Paragraph 2 below. The Agreement to Tender Form should be completed & appropriate authorisation obtained.
- 1.4 Advertising Opportunities
For all opportunities over £10k a copy of the invitation to tender should be placed on the LEP website and sent to Marketing Cheshire so they can upload the opportunity onto the Chest:

[The Chest, the North West eProcurement Portal.](#)

The Chest, “is the North West's Local Authority Procurement Portal which has been created with funding from the North West Centre of Excellence to bring together buyers and suppliers making it easier for businesses to find out about new sources of potential revenue and to grow and develop to the benefit of the local economy.”

- 1.5 There may be, very occasionally, exemptions to the CTP in the form of a **Single Tender Process (STP)**.

- 2 **Single Tender Process (STP)**. For exemption from the CTP suitable grounds/ reason(s) based on one or more of the following criteria must be provided:

- Emergency
- No Proven Alternative
- Health & Safety

- 2.1 **Exceptions to following STP & CTP**. There are three specific instances when it is permissible not to follow either the STP or the CTP process. These exceptions are:
- Sponsorship
 - Secondments
 - Joint projects with other public bodies where their relevant procurement policies or rules will apply.
- 2.2 Once the STP rationale or agreement to competitive tender form has been completed for amounts up to and including £10,000, authorisation from the Deputy Chief Executive Officer must be obtained prior to any funds/ funding being committed. For amounts over £10,000 authorisation from the Chief Executive must be obtained.

2.3 For procurement up to and including £50,000 contractual commitment will be authorised by the Chief Executive. For procurement above £50,000 contractual commitment will be awarded following appraisal and review by the Chief Executive plus the Chair or Deputy Chair or Director. This is following confirmation from the Deputy Chief Executive or Finance Director that sufficient funds are available for all values.

3. Vendor Management & Relationships

- 3.1 All vendors will be dealt with equally, with integrity, fairness, courtesy and in a professional manner. Relationships will rest on two-way openness and trust.
- 3.2 All CWLEP staff should exercise a strict code of professional conduct to ensure that relations of a compromising nature, or even the appearance of such relations, are scrupulously avoided.
- 3.3 The CWLEP Gifts and Hospitality Code of Practice prohibits receipt of entertainment and gifts other than of a nominal value (£20 + VAT) or of an office related nature e.g. diaries and pens.
- 3.4 Any gifts or hospitality worth £20 or more should be recorded in the CWLEP Gifts and Hospitality Register.

4 Contract Variations

- 4.1 Any modifications or extensions to contracts must be done in compliance with the Public Contracts regulations and in line with the original procurement process.
- 4.2 Any further contract variation will require a very strong supporting rationale and as such will need to be submitted as a business case, for approval by the CWLEP Board. In order to avoid extending a contract beyond its initial purpose, no contract may be extended more than twice.

5 Documentation

- Single Tender Form
- Agreement to Competitive Tendering Process
- LEP Funding Request and Authorisation Form

6 Responsibility

The Chief Executive will have overall responsibility for ensuring that appropriate tendering practices are adhered to. CWLEP staff will have responsibility for ensuring that procurement activity within their business area(s) is undertaken in a professional manner and in accordance with this policy.

7 Monitor and Review

This policy will be kept under review and amended from time to time where necessary. Any comments on the application of this procedure should be addressed to the Chief Executive.

Authorised by:

Date:

APPENDIX F: PRINCIPLES FOR S151 OFFICERS IN ACCOUNTABLE BODIES WORKING WITH LEPS

INTRODUCTION

When a local authority or combined authority acts as the accountable body for a local enterprise partnership, the role of the relevant section 151 officer in overseeing the proper administration of financial affairs is extended to include those of the local enterprise partnership.

Working together, CIPFA and the Cities and Local Growth Unit have developed five principles which they expect the section 151 officer role for LEPS to meet when instilling good and proportionate financial governance:

Enshrining a corporate position for the section 151 officer in LEP assurance.

Creating a formal/structured mandate for the section 151 officer.

Embedding good governance into decision making.

Ensuring effective review of governance.

Appropriate skills and resourcing.

These principles define core activities and behaviours and will be supported by specific responsibilities agreed locally between the section 151 officers, the chair and chief executive officer (CEO) of the LEP. While the organisation structure may differ the principles that govern the role of the section 151 officer will remain constant.

ABOUT THE PRINCIPLES

These principles recognise that each LEP is independent and has the flexibility to determine the details of its governance and accountability arrangements in line with the Government's *LEP National Assurance Framework*. They recognise the LEP's have a variety of legal forms, structures and funding streams including retained schemes and LEP's in mayoral combined authorities. The design of the principles recognises these differences whilst reflecting the role of the sections 151 officer within each arrangement as the principle of accountability does not change.

The principles and our initial response/ comment are set out below:

PRINCIPLE 1 - Enshrining a corporate position for the section 151 officer in LEP assurance

<p>The chair and chief executive of the LEP shall work with the section 151 officer to agree an effective responsibility arrangement. This will include both parties agreeing to work together to seek a mutually agreeable resolution where disputes arise. The shared responsibility should be agreed and set out in the Local Assurance Framework, ahead of the section 151 officer writing to the accounting officer of MHCLG as required in the National Assurance Framework. The section 151 officer must also provide an Annual Assurance Statement 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 as part of the LEP's Annual</p>	<p>The role of the Accountable Body is set out in the Local Assurance Framework, and further detailed in a partnership agreement letter between the LEP's Chief Executive and the S151 Officer. The S151 Officer is responsible for delivery of the Accountable Body's functions</p> <p>The LEP has due regard for the responsibilities of the S151 Officer and via monthly and ad hoc meetings the LEP's Chief Executive (and Finance & Governance Director, when appointed) will work closely with, and provide the assurance</p>
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Conversation with government – beyond this, they are free to delegate.	<p>to, the S151 Officer (and his nominated Deputy) with regard to the governance, decision making and administration of the LEP's affairs, and provide access to information and its officers in an open and transparent manner</p> <p>Dispute resolution process in place (though will reviewed in the light of this Guidance)</p> <p>The Local Assurance Framework will be updated, as regards the shared responsibility arrangement outlined above</p>
The section 151 officer shall be supported by the LEP and the accountable body to carry out such checks as are necessary to independently ensure the proper administration of financial affairs in the LEP.	Covered by existing arrangements, in terms of CEC Internal Audit and Finance Service liaison Though need to review internal audit reporting process, as per Principle 4
Where the section 151 officer raises concerns or makes recommendations about changes required to ensure the proper administration of financial affairs, these shall be acted upon promptly by the LEP.	Agreed
The section 151 officer and chief executive/ chair acknowledge that proper administration of financial affairs continues throughout the year. Any improvements required should be clearly set out in the Local Assurance Framework action plan and monitored appropriately for delivery. Both have a role in identifying staff training needs to ensure compliant spend of funds and that all staff understand the governance and control arrangements.	<p>Agreed</p> <p>Need to more clearly recognise action plan following internal audits; and also include in action plan any ideas/ needs recognised out of regular CEC Finance Service/ LEP liaison</p>

PRINCIPLE 2 - Creating a formal/structured mandate for the section 151 officer

The LEP board, and its supporting governance structure (where there are appropriate schemes of delegation), is the strategic body responsible for taking decisions on LEP business and LEP programme activity.	Agreed
Where concerns or improper financial administration are identified the section 151 officer shall provide recommendations for improvements to be made. The LEP board shall be responsible for making changes to address the concerns in line with the recommendations following local discussion with the section 151 officer in line with the agreed responsibility arrangement. Where the board does not agree with the recommendations and no agreement on the way forward can be reached with	<p>Agreed</p> <p>NB. This guidance piece will inform our review/ update of the Dispute Resolution process</p>

the section 151 officer, the matter shall be referred to MHCLG who will escalate as appropriate.	
The section 151 officer shall have the right to record an opinion if required on the financial implication and assessment of risk (such as delivery risks and cost overrun risks) in every board paper. The LEP board do not have to follow the section 151 officer's advice above, but where they decide on a course of action which goes against that advice, the board should indicate and record the rationale for not following it.	Agreed Need to determine practical arrangements (e.g. sufficient time to consider/ feedback on Board papers in advance of meetings); and also establish improved Board report template to capture S151 comments and sign-off
Section 151 officers (or their delegated representatives) should also be invited to attend all board meetings and board agenda setting meetings, but shall not be entitled to vote or otherwise make LEP decisions	Agreed S151 Officer now being invited
The LEP shall recognise that treasury management and borrowing is part of the role of the accountable body.	Agreed, in relation to holding significant grant funds (LGF; GPF) NB. Day-to-day cashflow/ bank account management is a role of the LEP company
The section 151 officer should ensure that there are the correct, established financial processes in place leading up to board decisions such that financial delegations are respected.	Agreed Delegations have been agreed by the LEP Board and are set out at paragraph 8, page 11 of this document.
Where there are concerns about systemic financial problems this shall be raised with the Cities and Local Growth Unit. The section 151 officer will work with the LEP to improve financial standards, and progress shall become a standing item in the board meetings until the section 151 officer is satisfied that the issue has been resolved.	Agreed
The 151 officer and the LEP should agree appropriate arrangements over the discharge of the functions of an audit committee.	Agreed; in place

PRINCIPLE 3 - Embedding good governance into decision making

The section 151 officer working with the LEP chief executive and chair should ensure that the LEP and accountable body has procedures in place to consider the financial implications of decisions before and during the decision-making process rather than reviewing decisions afterwards.	Agreed

LEPs and the section 151 officer should agree the budget risks facing the LEP at the outset of the financial year and review them on a frequent basis. The risk appetite should be understood by both the LEP and the section 151 officer. The LEP shall provide the risk register to the section 151 officer on each occasion that it is revised.	Agreed In place and operating, though may need to review/ strengthen if complexities/ risks of LEP activities increase (e.g. EZ-related investments)
At the beginning of the budget year, the section 151 officer should be entitled to comment on the adequacy of the budget plan. This should be provided by the LEP chief executive at the beginning of each financial year.	Agreed; in place
In addition, the LEP should set out their scrutiny arrangements in their Local Assurance Framework to make sure there is strong governance in place, and appropriate scrutiny procedures to support that governance.	Agreed; external scrutiny committee in place
If the dual role of the section 151 officer results in a potential conflict of interest impartial advice should be sought to ensure transparency.	Agreed

PRINCIPLE 4 - Ensuring effective review of governance

An internal audit plan should be agreed for the year, this plan should include a risk-based audit plan of LEP activity that will provide assurance to the section 151 officer and the LEP board at appropriate points through the year. LEPs should ensure that there are arrangements for funding the internal audit activity.	Agreed; in place
The internal auditors of the accountable body may provide assurances to both the LEP Board and the section 151 officer. Guidance on internal audit sets out the assurances to be provided and the reporting relationships to maintain audit independence.	Agreed; though will review/ reflect in light of internal audit guidance as to reporting/ assurance to both S151 and LEP CEO/ Board, and make appropriate arrangements
Following a completed audit (by either internal or external audit) where there are comments that relate to the LEP they should be reported back to the board by the Section 151 officer and chief executive or their representatives and provided to the Cities and Local Growth Unit.	Agreed – though assumed that this must only relate to serious/ adverse comments, in respect of needing to provide copy to CLG
Where serious concerns are encountered during the year for example repeated non-compliance with legal requirements or fraud then the section 151 officer shall promptly raise these with the Cities and Local Growth Unit. Local resolution should be the first mechanism to resolve disputes, if this has been	Agreed Though assume these two sentences should be reversed (i.e. second sentence read first...)

unsuccessful it should be raised with the Cities and Local Growth Unit.	
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PRINCIPLE 5 - Appropriate skills and resourcing

The section 151 officer shall be given appropriate resources to carry out its functions in respect of the LEP, including audit where appropriate. LEPs and accountable bodies should frequently review resource needs and consider if they are being appropriately met.	Agreed
Underpinning good governance in the LEP model is an expectation of mutual support between the LEP and its accountable body.	Agreed
There should be a culture of working that respects the section 151 officer role of ensuring appropriate procedures are in place for scrutiny and financial rigour.	Agreed; and related to first guidance point on effective shared responsibility arrangements