

**STOKE-ON-TRENT AND STAFFORDSHIRE
LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP
PARTNERSHIP BOARD MEETING**

22nd March 2018

Governance and Transparency Guidance

1. Purpose

To secure approval to amendments to the Constitution to further enact the outcome of the Annual Conversation.

2. Background

The Government provided guidance on the creation of an Assurance Framework for Local Enterprise Partnerships in November 2016 which can be found [here](#). This provided the context to the creation of an amended constitution and suite of supporting documents under the overarching title of the "Assurance Framework". Our revisions were agreed as being compliant, and the grant funding managed by the LEP was subsequently received from Government.

During the course of the year work by the National Audit Office, the issues raised by a review of the Greater Cambridgeshire Greater Peterborough LEP, and a review of [Local Enterprise Partnership Governance and Transparency](#) have resulted in the publication of best practice guidance [here](#). The other documents have been circulated previously

The best practice guidance requires the further documentation of procedures and changes to the constitution as follows. In the main the changes are an amendment of current practice rather than requiring the creation of new procedures. However, resource within the team will need to be focussed on ensuring continued compliance.

It is worth noting that the LEP is audited on its practices and procedures as part of two annual exercises. Each year in the summer Staffordshire County Council as the Accountable Body for capital funding has undertaken an internal audit of the SSLEP which has been published on the website. In addition we have an "Annual Conversation" with Government which follows a standard approach and reviews governance, delivery and strategy.

Utilising the electronic procedure a number of immediate amendments to enact the requirements of meeting arrangements, whistleblowing, confidential reporting, code of conduct, marking scheme, and register of interests were agreed and introduced from the 28th February. This has

enabled the Accountable Body to confirm the changes to MHCLG and for SSLEP to apply for a further allocation of Core Funding to cover 2018/19.

The next task is to amend the constitution to more clearly set out the roles of the relevant groups and where necessary define delegations. The revised constitution is included as appendix 1. Appendix 2 sets out the key changes. In many areas the document hasn't changed in content but to simplify it the core protocols have been set out in one place.

The major change for the partnership is the amendment of the Partnership Board to become the more encompassing "Partnership" with some consequential membership changes. This is balanced by the change of title of the Executive Group to become the Executive Board and the avoidance of the term board in the description of the other groups to minimise confusion externally. This has been requested as a consequence of the Annual Conversation.

3. Recommendations

It is recommended that

- a) The Partnership Board considers the revised constitution
- b) The revised constitution is approved and published on the website in accordance with the Best Practice Guidance

Appendices

1. Revised Constitution
2. Summary of Changes