



Department for Levelling Up,
Housing & Communities



Department for
Business, Energy
& Industrial Strategy

Annex B: Section 151/73 /127 Assurance Statement

The Section 151/73/127 Officer should here provide a report to the Annual Performance Review 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. The report should focus on any issues raised in Annex A: Annual Performance Review Preparation. This report should be sent to the Assurance Team via localgrowthassurance@communities.gov.uk, copying the Cities and Local Growth Unit Area Lead by **14 January 2022**.

(max 500 words)

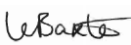
As reported in previous years, I continue to have good and close working relationships with both the Chief Executive of OxLEP and the Director of Corporate Services. I continue to attend as many of the Executive Board meetings personally as possible and provide regular financial updates to the meetings. I also personally attend the Finance & Audit Committee, a sub-committee of the Board and where relevant, bring agenda items. If I am personally unable to attend either of these meetings, the Deputy s151 officer attends on my behalf to ensure there is always a representative from the accountable body. In addition, the Deputy s151 is a member of the Programme Delivery subgroup and attends every meeting.

The impact of Covid-19 has continued to impact on the way of working and the focus of the LEP over the last year, but despite these challenges, the governance and accountability arrangements remain strong.

Although the next Internal Audit is not due until 2023/24, given there have been no significant changes in the arrangements I would expect strong assurance on the operation of internal controls as set out in the previous audit which confirmed there is good governance and financial management arrangements operating within OxLEP and an effective working relationship between OxLEP and OCC as the Accountable Body.

Good relationships continue with OxLEP's external auditors and the County Council, with discussion and agreement on treatment of expenditure and income in respective accounts and disclosure notes to ensure transparency for the public.

Please note this is an interim statement for the year ending 31 March 2022.

Signed: 

Name: Lorna Baxter

Position: Director of Finance (Section 151 Officer)

Date: 11 January 2022