

Operation Update, Appendix E – SELEP Response to Compliance Checks by the Oversight and Compliance Team, Cities and Local Growth Unit

Succession Planning

Issue: The National Local Growth Assurance Framework (pp 20-21, para 65.i) requires the LEP's Local Assurance Framework to include appropriate succession planning and arrangements for the resignation of Board Members. Whilst we noted a broad recruitment policy in SELEP's Terms of Reference, we would like the LEP to provide more details on succession planning. Please can they include this in their LAF, or in their TOR if this is clearly linked from their LAF.

Response/Action: The outcome of the independent review of the Strategic Board will help define the future Board composition and the succession plan for this board structure.

As part of the updated Local Assurance Framework to be considered by the Strategic Board in June 2019, SELEP will provide further details of how the independent review of the Strategic Board will help to develop a process for the board succession planning.

The approval of the succession plan for the Strategic Board is on the forward plan for consideration by the Strategic Board in December 2019.

Schemes of delegation

Issue: The National Local Growth Assurance Framework (p31, para 119) requires the LEP to publish a clear scheme of delegation which specifies which body or person is responsible for the final sign-off of funding decisions. In all cases there must be clear reporting lines back to the LEP Board. We were unable to locate this information either in the LAF or on the LEP's website. Please can the LEP indicate where this is, or update their LAF if needed.

Response/Action: The SELEP Assurance Framework already sets out that the Accountability Board is responsible for all funding decisions. This is stated on pages 4 (para 1.6), 5 (2.1.1) and 8 (para 2.3.2) of our Local Assurance Framework.

This information will be presented more clearly on the SELEP website and in the wording of the revised Assurance Framework, to be considered by the Strategic Board on the 28th June 2019.

Code of Conduct

Issue: The National Local Growth Assurance Framework (p24, para 83) requires all LEP Board Members and LEP Officers to sign up to a code of conduct based on the Seven Principles of Public Life; and that the LEP should publish the Code(s) of Conduct on its website. We noted that the LEP has a Code of Conduct; but we were unable to ascertain that people have to sign up to it. It is recommended that LEPs make it clear on their website or in the LAF that all Board Members and Staff proactively sign up to the code.

Response/ Action – In completing registers of interest, Board members and officers are required to sign to agree that “I have done and shall continue to comply with all other SELEP policies, including, but not limited to, the Code of Conduct and the Gifts and Hospitality policy; I understand that all of the policies are available on the SELEP website”. These registers of interest are published on the SELEP website and reviewed every six months. This practice ensures that all board members are signed up to the code of conduct, including the Seven Principles of Public Life. We will update the website to ensure that this practice is explained.

SELEP officers are employed by Essex County Council and are therefore required to commit to the Essex County Council Code of Conduct and Seven Principles of Public Life as part of officers contract of employment. Again, this practice will be made clearer on the SELEP website.

Register of Interests

The National Local Growth Assurance Framework (p22, para 70.h) As a minimum, the LEP should publish on the website Board Members registers of interest and the register of the Chief Executive Officer. In our recent check we were unable to locate the Register of Interests for CEX Adam Bryan. Please can the LEP indicate where it is, or amend their website if needed.

Response/ Action: The Register of Interest for Adam Bryan, Chief Executive Officer, is made available on the SELEP website –

<https://www.southeastlep.com/app/uploads/2019/05/Adam-Bryan-2018-10-30-ROI.pdf>

The location of this RoI has been moved so that it is easier to find –

https://www.southeastlep.com/about_us/meet-our-people/secretariat/

Government Branding

The National Local Growth Assurance Framework (p30, para 115) states that the LEP should commit to meet Government branding guidelines for projects in its Local Growth Assurance Framework and to ensure correct branding and wording is used for websites, signage, social media, press notices and other marketing material. Recent checks on the LEP website and LAF could not find this commitment or any branding relating to government funding on the website.

Response/Action: SELEP will provide a firmer commitment within the revised Local Assurance Framework to meeting Government's branding guidelines.

Local partners are already required to comply with SELEP and Government branding guidance as a condition of funding through the grant agreements or service level agreements under which the funding is transferred to project sponsors.

A review of the website will be completed to ensure full compliance with the governments branding guidelines. Each LGF project page already includes a copy of the HMG logo, but these pages will be reviewed to consider whether any additional measures are required. If additional measures are identified, these will be implemented by the end of July 2019.