



Annex C: Governance Assurance Statement

The LEP Chair and Chief Executive should here provide a brief formal assurance statement on the status of governance and transparency. This should include any overview and scrutiny function undertaken by the Accountable Body. This should be sent to the Assurance Team via localgrowthassurance@levellingup.gov.uk, copying the DBT Area Lead, by **29 February 2024**. This statement should also be published on the LEP's website by **15 March 2024** with confirmation sent to the email address above. **(max 500 words)**

EM3 strives to maintain high standards for transparency and accountability in all that we do. We have adhered to the values and standards set out in our Assurance Framework, which is reviewed regularly and is published on our website. We have met the requirements of LEPs set out in the National Assurance Framework; this includes meeting the target to achieve 50% female representation on our board.

Our commitment to transparency and accountability is reflected in the following:

- Strong local authority representation within our governance arrangements, including six Leaders on the EM3 Board
- The Joint Leaders Board, which brings together all 15 of our local authority partners
- An Annual Conference which is open to the public and includes questions to EM3 Board members
- Publication on our website of Board papers and other governance-related documentation

Our Annual Conference, in October, was attended by over 120 delegates from the business, local government and education sectors. Our Annual Report for 2022-23, *Innovation Region*, was launched at the Annual Conference and widely disseminated to partners.

We continue to align our work with the work of our local authorities, including regular meetings of the Joint Leaders Board (JLB). The formal scrutiny session of the JLB took place in November 2023 and paid credit to how EM3 had remained focused on delivery, at the same time as engaging positively with the upper tier local authorities regarding LEP integration, with no issues or concerns raised.

Representatives of our Accountable Body (Hampshire County Council) attend meetings of our Board and of our Resources, Finance and Audit Committee. We have worked closely with colleagues from our Accountable Body throughout the year to ensure effective delivery of financial, procurement, HR and legal processes.



Our priorities for each year are set out in our Delivery Plan, which is published on our website. Key elements of our Delivery Plan for 2023/24 included:

- **Strategic economic planning** – continuing to gather and analyse economic evidence and business intelligence in partnership with business organisations.
- **Support for business** – including delivery of Growth Hub programmes, and a Green is Good programme to help businesses with the journey to net zero.
- **Nurturing high potential sectors and clusters** – including the establishment of a Hampshire and Surrey Jet Zero Task Force.
- **Inward investment and international trade** – including publication of the Enterprise Zone Business Directory.
- **Public and private sector investment** – including opening the Future Fund opportunity to co-fund innovative projects.
- **Employer perspective on skills** – including delivery of Careers Hub programmes and supporting the development and implementation of the Local Skills Improvement Plan.

Alongside our continued commitment to achieving our outputs from the 2023-24 Delivery Plan, we have worked closely with Hampshire County Council and Surrey County Council to support the integration of EM3 functions into upper tier authorities by 31 March 2024. During this transition period, the primary focus of the EM3 team has been to maintain a focus on effective delivery, ensure that there is a smooth transition, and provide a strong foundation for Hampshire and Surrey County Councils to build upon.

Signed:

Name: Michael Queen

Position: Chair Enterprise M3 Local Enterprise Partnership

Date: 21 February 2024

Signed:

Name: Stephen Martin

Position: Managing Director Enterprise M3 Local Enterprise

Date: 21 February 2024