

London Economic Action Partnership (LEAP)

Section 127 Officer Assurance Statement 2022

The LEAP Board acts in an advisory capacity to the Mayor of London, which gives it a different role from that of most LEPs. All endorsements are subject to approval by the Mayor. They must comply with the GLA's corporate governance, financial, legal and procurement frameworks and processes, and are subject to the same audit and scrutiny. The GLA's finance officers maintain close oversight of LEAP programmes and budgets and input to all formal decisions, their financial consequences and subsequent monitoring.

Finance comments are included on all reports to the Board and its sub-groups. I personally attend the Board wherever possible, and I am represented at senior manager level if I need to send apologies. Senior managers also attend meetings of LEAP's sub-groups. The finance role encompasses oversight of business case proposals, advice on financial deliverability, and financial due diligence of proposed recipients.

A Deed of Agreement with LB Newham governs the collection, management and application of business rates in the Royal Docks Enterprise Zone (EZ). This income is insufficient in the early stage of the EZ development to provide all necessary investment, so supplementary forward funding is made available by the GLA. A £212m programme of expenditure was approved in summer 2018 and, although forecast business rates have since reduced, I am currently satisfied that a sufficient level can be generated over the remaining life of the EZ to fund the programme and any GLA borrowing. However, forecasts of the timing of business rates income and any impact from developer partner delivery risk continue to be monitored. Expenditure commitments and delivery plans have been reprofiled to minimise risk for the GLA.

LEAP's Local Growth Fund grant allocation to 2020-21 has been fully spent although project delivery will continue beyond 2022. The Getting Building Fund grant allocation for 2020-21 and 2021-22, granted directly to the Mayor rather than LEAP, is also fully committed and will be spent by 31 March 2022.

Any project surpluses have been quickly identified and reallocated for other LEAP priorities and returns from maturing capital investments made through the Growing Places Fund are being applied to new projects.

There is close liaison between finance staff and the client teams responsible for programme expenditure and delivery. There are no issues I wish to raise regarding the governance and transparency of financial decision making and use of funds allocated to LEAP.

David Gallie
Section 127 Officer
13 January 2022