

Item Number: 3  
Item Title: SGF Terms of Reference  
Meeting Date: 30 January 2020  
Purpose: For Decision

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## 1. Recommendations

**SGF Members are asked to:**

- **Consider** and **Agree** the Solent Growth Forum Terms of Reference.
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## 2. Background

### National Context: National Local Growth Assurance Framework

All LEPs across England are required to operate in accordance with the National Local Growth Assurance Framework (available [here](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/768356/National_Local_Growth_Assurance_Framework.pdf) for reference: [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/768356/National\\_Local\\_Growth\\_Assurance\\_Framework.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/768356/National_Local_Growth_Assurance_Framework.pdf))

The Framework sets out a requirement for LEPs to agree with their Accountable Body the appropriate scrutiny arrangements to ensure that decisions have the necessary independent and external scrutiny in place.

In addition to any agreed internal scrutiny arrangements within the LEP, the LEP should participate in relevant Local Authority scrutiny arrangements to guarantee the effective and appropriate democratic scrutiny of their investment decisions.

The Framework provides three options for ensuring this as follows:

1. making an open offer to attend Local Authority Scrutiny Committees in their area and attending when requested; this will enable democratic scrutiny to take place when required and enable LEP decision makers to be held to account;
2. creating a joint Local Authority Scrutiny Committee, comprised of all Local Authorities from the LEP area, who meet to scrutinise and examine LEP decisions; or
3. creating a joint Scrutiny Committee which comprises of all Local Authorities from the LEP area and relevant representatives that can provide scrutiny from a business perspective, who meet to scrutinise and examine LEP decisions.

LEPs are required to record publicly their attendance at Local Authority scrutiny committees and ensure that they provide details of the outcome on the LEP website e.g. by publishing or linking to any publicly available reports or minutes resulting from the committee. LEPs should respond positively to requests to share information to ensure that the Committee is in possession of the necessary information to provide robust scrutiny and advice.

### Local Context: LEP Review

During 2018, as part of the national LEP Review, the Solent LEP undertook an extensive consultation exercise with

all Local Authorities in the Solent area. This process was led by the LEP Chair and focussed on future engagement with Local Authorities.

Feedback from Local Authorities requested that the LEP establish a dedicated Solent Leaders Forum, to enable collective strategic engagement with all Local Authority Leaders and Chief Executives from across the Solent LEP area (in addition to neighbouring Local Authority areas).

In addition to this, Local Authorities also requested that the LEP reconstitute its existing Solent Growth Forum to focus explicitly on providing a public forum for overview and scrutiny of LEP activity (option 2 in the National Local Growth Assurance Framework).

The Solent LEP Board considered this feedback and agreed both of the above recommendations from Local Authority colleagues. 2019 has seen the establishment of a new organisational structure for the Solent LEP as part of our Local Assurance Framework, incorporating the Solent Leaders Forum and reconstituted Solent Growth Forum. The Solent LEP Assurance Framework is an important document in establishing the policies, processes and systems the Solent LEP work to in order to guarantee the public money we are entrusted with is properly managed in a transparent and accountable manner; ensuring resources are spent with regularity, propriety, and securing value for money. A copy of the Solent LEP Assurance Framework is available here for reference: <https://solentlep.org.uk/media/2825/solent-lep-assurance-framework-oct-2019.pdf>

#### **4. Solent Growth Forum Terms of Reference**

A draft Terms of Reference for the reconfigured Solent Growth Forum are provided in Annexe A.

Solent Growth Forum Members should note that, in line with the National Local Growth Assurance Framework and local feedback from Local Authority colleagues, the focus of the Solent Growth Forum is to provide a joint Local Authority Scrutiny Committee, comprised of all Local Authorities from the LEP area, who meet to scrutinise and examine LEP decisions.

Alongside ensuring the Solent LEP is able to meet the requirements of the National Local Growth Assurance Framework, the role of the Solent Growth Forum is extremely important to the Solent LEP in ensuring that we can benefit from external scrutiny and expert oversight through our local authority partners.

Solent Growth Forum Members are asked to:

- **Consider** and **Agree** the Solent Growth Forum Terms of Reference.