



Worcestershire
Local Enterprise Partnership

WLEP APR Action Tracker

FAR Committee

8 September 2020

Areas to Cover

GOVERNANCE

- 2019/20: Annual Performance Review (APR) Letter and Action Points
- National Assurance Framework (NAF) Exemptions and Extensions

APR 2019/20 Action Tracker

2019/20 APR Actions



Action #	Action Point	Owner	Completion Target Date	Date Completed	Status
1	Business Board refresh to be completed (from APR last year)	WLEP	30 April 2020 (target)		A/G
Action #	Action Point	Owner	Completion Target Date	Date Completed	Status
2	LEP to consider further on implementation of Programme Delivery Sub-board or a similar mechanism.	WLEP	30 Sept 2020 (target)		A
Action #	Action Point	Owner	Completion Target Date	Date Completed	Status
3	LEP to update on Board composition - complete Annex A Part B.	WLEP	2 March 2020 (10am)	24 Feb 2020	Complete

2019/20 APR Actions



Action #	Action Point	Owner	Completion Target Date	Date Completed	Status
4	LEP to publish Chair/CEO statement on website (Annex C).	WLEP	28 Feb 2020	17 Feb 2020	Complete

Action #	Action Point	Owner	Completion Target Date	Date Completed	Status
5	Section 151 Officer letter to be submitted to MHCLG Permanent Secretary See Annex E for template letter.	WLEP	28 Feb 2020	18 Feb 2020	Complete

Action #	Action Point	Owner	Completion Target Date	Date Completed	Status
6	LEP to submit Q3 return to provide further evidence of delivery performance	WLEP	21 Feb 2020	19 Feb 2020	Complete

2019/20 APR Actions



Action #	Action Point	Owner	Completion Target Date	Date Completed	Status
7	LEP to develop a short contingency plan to deal with any LGF underspend on projects, should this occur in 2020/21	WLEP	To be developed for March Board meeting	27 March 2020	Complete

Action #	Action Point	Owner	Completion Target Date	Date Completed	Status
8	LEP and S151 officer to consider issue of S151 attendance at 1 Board meeting per year, as best practice for oversight and governance.	LEP / S151 Officer	To be considered in 2020	July 2020	Complete

2019/20 APR Actions



Action #	Action Point	Owner	Completion Target Date	Date Completed	Status
9	Complete a review of the Growth Hub operating model	WLEP	Sept 2020		G

Action #	Action Point	Owner	Completion Target Date	Date Completed	Status
10	LEP to respond to Ministerial letter on overlaps	WLEP	28 Feb 2020	27 Feb 2020	Complete

NAF Exemptions and Extensions

Notification from BEIS

NAF Exemptions and Extensions

- On 28 July 2020, BEIS notified WLEP of a number of flexibilities agreed by Ministers on various aspects of the National Assurance Framework (NAF) for LEPs and Mayoral Combined Authorities, due to the impact of COVID-19
- WLEP Exec have reviewed and taken appropriate action accordingly...the following slides highlight the flexibilities agreed and WLEP's response

NAF Flexibilities

#	Provision in the NLGAF	NGALF Reference	Exemption
1	Publication of Accounts and Financial Information	“As a minimum, the LEP should publish on the website.... an annual financial statement...” Paragraph 70.	Where the LEP is reliant on Local Authorities for the data in order to publish an annual financial statement and the time frame for LAs has been extended until November 30 2020, the LEP should publish the annual financial statement by the end of December 2020, if they have not already done so.

WLEP Response – **COMPLETE**

- WLEP have published their Annual Report 19/20, including financial statement
- WLEP have published this onto the WLEP website

NAF Flexibilities

#	Provision in the NLGAF	NGALF Reference	Exemption
2	Appointment Process for Board Members and Chairs	“The LEP should outline, or refer to, its appointment process for Board Members (public and private sector), Chairs and Deputy Chairs within the Local Assurance Framework. As part of this they should ensure that they advertise opportunities for private sector leaders to become a LEP Chair or private sector Board Member when vacancies emerge. They should advertise openly, on a variety of platforms to ensure that people across the business community have an opportunity to apply and consider the diversity requirements outlined in this Framework...” Paragraph 75-77	Due to the current circumstances it is agreed that the board may need to extend or temporary appoint board members/chairs without needing to proceed to a full recruitment on the basis a full and open recruitment is conducted after these exceptional circumstances cease. This should be recorded in the LEPs board minutes and an email sent to the Area Lead, copying localgrowthassurance@communities.gov.uk so that the Unit has a record. We therefore propose to review extensions to term limits or temporary appointments in October 2020.

WLEP Response - **COMPLETE**

- Nick Baldwin and Chris Walklett both had their terms extended to 31 March 2021 – as agreed and minuted in Para 8.6 on May 2020 WLEP Board minutes
- Email issued to Becky Miles and Ollie Hindle on 29/07/20 to confirm

NAF Flexibilities

#	Provision in the NLGAF	NGALF Reference	Exemption
3	Publication of Meeting and Agenda Items	“Each LEP must explain on an easily accessible part of their website the documentation they will routinely publish ...meeting agendas and papers to be published 5 clear working days before the meeting takes place; and minutes of board meetings to be published within 10 clear working days of the meeting taking place”. Paragraph 103	The timeframes set out in paragraph 103 should still be adhered to where possible; however it is appreciated that during this unprecedented time there may be exceptional circumstances, such as staff illness, where it is not possible to adhere to the timeframes. We propose to review this in October 2020.

WLEP Response - **COMPLETE**

- N/A – WLEP Exec continue to publish agendas and papers in line with WLEP Local Assurance Framework timescales

NAF Flexibilities

#	Provision in the NLGAF	NGALF Reference	Exemption
4	Link to Accountable Body accounts	“The LEP should provide a link to the Accountable Body accounts on their website. For LEPs limited by guarantee, a link to the accounts of the LEP for the financial year on the Companies House website should also be included in the financial statement and published on the website”. Paragraph 109	We recognise that Local Authorities have been given an extension until November 30 2020 as to when financial audits are to be undertaken and that this may have a knock on effect to such provisions for LEPs. The link referred to in paragraph 109, should be updated once the Accountable Body has published its accounts and by end of December 2020

WLEP Response - **UNDERWAY**

- S151 Officer has confirmed WCC will provide WLEP with a link to the statement of accounts as soon as they are published so can be included on WLEP website
- WLEP’s annual financial statement (2019/20) has been published as part of Annual Report 2019/20 (as per #1)

NAF Flexibilities

#	Provision in the NLGAF	NGALF Reference	Exemption
5	LEP Board composition – RBS Group employees	“The LEP Board must contain representatives from different parts of the community. In addition, at least two-thirds of the Board must be representatives from the private sector as defined by the National Accounts Sector Classification”. Paragraph 125	Reliance on private/public sector definition as set by the National Accounts Sector Classification. There is a caveat already in place for HE/FE stating that they are classified as private sector. We propose extending this caveat to RBS group employees.

WLEP Response - **COMPLETE**

- N/A – WLEP Board composition is compliant with private / public sector requirements

NAF Flexibilities

#	Provision in the NLGAF	NGALF Reference	Exemption
6	LEP Board composition – private sector	“The LEP Board must contain representatives from different parts of the community. In addition, at least two-thirds of the Board must be representatives from the private sector as defined by the National Accounts Sector Classification”. Paragraph 125	2/3rd target: where due to the current circumstances a decision is made at board level not to hold open recruitment for private sector replacement board members, those board appointments can be recorded as vacant private sector positions and this will not affect the board representation statistics. The Board must, once this period of exceptional circumstances has passed, move to an open recruitment as soon as reasonably practicable. We propose to review this position on LEP Board composition in October 2020.

WLEP Response - **COMPLETE**

- N/A – WLEP Board composition is compliant with private / public sector requirements

NAF Flexibilities

#	Provision in the NLGAF	NGALF Reference	Exemption
7	LEP Board composition – SME and Diversity champions	“At least one member of the main LEP Board must be designated as a Small and Medium Enterprise (SME) Champion for the LEP. They should be clearly named on the LEP website. Their role is to champion SME businesses and their interests within the LEP and local community”. Paragraph 127	Wherever possible roles such as SME Champions and Diversity Champions should be maintained. However, it is appreciated in the current circumstances where a board member may resign it may not be possible to reappoint these immediately and therefore there may be a delay until the post is filled. We propose to review this position on LEP Board composition in October 2020.

WLEP Response - **COMPLETE**

- Jenny Long performs the role of SME Champion for WLEP Board
- Nicola Whiting has agreed to perform role of Diversity Champion
- This is now clearly sign-posted on WLEP website within Board Member bios

NAF Flexibilities

#	Provision in the NLGAF	NGALF Reference	Exemption
8	LEP Board composition – co-optees	“LEPs should have a Board which is a maximum of 20 people, with the option to co-opt an additional five Board members with specialist knowledge on a one year basis, unless there are exceptional circumstances”. Paragraph 128	With board approval, co-optees can have a short extended term of longer than the one year stipulated. We propose to review this position on LEP Board composition in October 2020.

WLEP Response - **COMPLETE**

- N/A – WLEP governance model stipulates 14 Board members, therefore below the 20 recommended maximum and therefore no requirement for co-optees

NAF Flexibilities

#	Provision in the NLGAF	NGALF Reference	Exemption
9	LEP Board composition – Chair’s term	<p>“To support the Chair in their role, all LEPs should appoint a Deputy Chair. The LEP should have a defined term limit of three years for the Chair and Deputy Chair, with an optional extension of three years. There is an option to extend for a further three years in exceptional circumstances if approved by the Board”. Paragraph 133</p>	<p>We hold that the current circumstances are exceptional. Where the board wished to extend the term for Chairs and Deputy Chairs beyond nine years maximum individual LEPs should send an email localgrowthassurance@communities.gov.uk copying the Area Lead, for the Unit to consent to the extended period. We propose to review this position on LEP Chair and Deputy Chair terms in October 2020.</p>

WLEP Response - **COMPLETE**

- WLEP Board recruitment process to take place later in 2020/21 – will need to consider private sector vice-chair replacement for Nick Baldwin

NAF Flexibilities

#	Provision in the NLGAF	NGALF Reference	Exemption
10	Scrutiny/Audit Arrangements	Full details in Paragraphs 152 – 159	Depending on the Scrutiny/Audit timetable for each LEP these activities may be postponed due to the exceptional circumstances. Transparency, appropriate audit trails and scrutiny/audit are still important and the normal course should be followed where practicable to do so. We propose to review this position in October 2020.

WLEP Response - **UNDERWAY**

- WLEP originally invited to present to OSPB on 3 June 2020 but postponed due to impact of COVID
- WLEP to draft the annual scrutiny report and share with WCC Legal & Democratic Services for circulation amongst OSPB members in October 2020

NAF Flexibilities

#	Provision in the NLGAF	NGALF Reference	Exemption
11	Annual General Meetings	“As part of their openness to the communities they serve, each LEP should openly advertise and hold an Annual General Meeting that is open to the public.” Paragraph 74	Given that the SoS has announced that councils can hold public meetings remotely whilst maintaining access to the public, we recommend that LEPs follow suit for their AGMs and adhering to government’s instructions regarding public distancing until and if they change.

WLEP Response - **UNDERWAY**

- WLEP CEO and Chair are considering arrangements for AGM 2020/21 – potential to link in with Annual conference virtual piece in October

NAF Flexibilities

#	Provision in the NLGAF	NGALF Reference	Exemption
12	Delivery plans / Year end reports	<p>“As part of the assurance monitoring process, each LEP is required to publish an annual report and delivery plan. The delivery plan and annual report should set out a well-developed understanding of the local economic evidence base to identify opportunities and obstacles to inclusive growth, prosperity and improved productivity. Government will work with LEPs to develop measures to report against in the plan and report. These will be considered as part of the annual assurance process. Delivery plans and annual reports should be published at the beginning of each financial year.”</p> <p>Paragraph 163</p>	<p><i>Strengthening LEPs</i> introduced delivery plans (inaugural plans were submitted last year) and year end reports, which were due to assess LEPs’ achievements against their delivery plans. LEPs’ resources may be better utilised in the current climate. We, therefore, propose to postpone the submission and publication of the documents to align with the Q1 data submission scheduled for August 2020.</p>

WLEP Response - **COMPLETE**

- Publication of Annual Report 2019/20 completed (as referenced in #1)
- Annual Delivery Plan 2020/21 also published by WLEP on website in August 2020



Worcestershire
Local Enterprise Partnership

**“To build a connected, creative, dynamic
economy for all.”**

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