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# Monitoring and Evaluation Framework

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Adopted Version

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March 2019

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## Introduction

The purpose of this framework is to outline the processes taken by the Worcestershire Local Enterprise Partnership (WLEP) Executive to maintain a regular record of project delivery, and for providing constructive evaluations of projects funded by the WLEP Growth Deal allocation. This framework also acts as a guide for the Project Leads for WLEP funded projects to understand why the WLEP wish to evaluate funded projects, what objectives are intended to be achieved through evaluation and what good practice and structure can offer a valuable guideline when planning an evaluation.

To meet this purpose, this document is split into five parts:

- (i) This introduction to the purpose of the document and the WLEP Growth Deal and its strategic aims.
- (ii) The Monitoring Plan, of which covers what the WLEP require through metric monitoring from projects and how it is conducted.
- (iii) The Evaluation Plan, of which outlines the WLEP's objectives in evaluation and links through to useful sources of best practice.
- (iv) The requirements from WLEP projects, of which outlines what is required to be achieved by local Project Leads for monitoring and evaluation purposes, how the resulting information will be communicated to stakeholders, and how good governance and quality in monitoring and evaluation will be achieved.
- (v) A record of the WLEP Monitoring and Evaluation Plans that have been completed to date.

This document is intended to act as a publically available record of the WLEP monitoring and evaluation practices and will be publically available via the Document Library on the WLEP website.

The Plan outlines the type of WLEP metrics that will inform delivery via monitoring, as well as evaluations that take place subsequent to project completion.

This Plan should be read in conjunction with the WLEP Assurance Framework, which identifies the WLEP's process for project entry, approval and delivery, and process regarding the governance of the WLEP's funded programme.

This Plan refers to the WLEP's Programme Implementation, Management and Monitoring System (PIMMS) when regarding the monitoring of projects. The purpose of the PIMMS is to establish in detail the framework for how the WLEP Executive will handle programme monitoring and management, and capture key project information (e.g. inputs, outcomes, risk etc.), in order to allow for internal assessment of projects and the wider programme.

This Plan refers to the Funding Agreements, Business Cases and Full Applications for funded projects. Each Funding Agreement details the grant conditions for WLEP Growth Deal funding, including key requirements for the Project Leads and their respective organisations to adhere to whilst delivering a funded project. The Business Cases and Full Applications are documents submitted to the WLEP as part of the development of funded projects that outline, in detail, the nature of the project with reference to monitoring and evaluation.

The WLEP will periodically review the Plan, in line with the WLEP Assurance Framework to gauge its effectiveness. The key priority behind this process is to ensure that the WLEP Executive Team and partners conduct a consistent and reliable monitoring and evaluation process that reflects best practice.

### **Worcestershire Growth Deal**

The WLEP is responsible for creating, delivering and facilitating economic growth in Worcestershire. For many projects, the projects through which the WLEP provides economic growth in Worcestershire is set out through key targets provided within the WLEP Strategic Economic Plan, the Worcestershire European Structural and Investment Funds (ESIF) Strategy and WLEP Business Plan, and other documents relevant to individual projects or funding streams more specifically (e.g. the Growth Deal Funding Agreement between Government and the WLEP). One of the key purposes of monitoring and evaluation is to ensure that the key targets of the WLEP are recognised as a result of WLEP investment both during (in terms of performance monitoring during delivery) and after project completion (in terms of the evaluation of funded projects).

The Growth Deal Funding Agreement between Government and the WLEP establishes what Government and the WLEP expect to see delivered as a result of the WLEP's Growth Deal allocation. This outlines the various projects the WLEP has successfully bid for funding for and the targets that each of these projects will be expected to contribute towards.

Furthermore, the outputs and outcomes are expected to contribute towards the targets outlined within the WLEP Strategic Economic Plan. These include:

- 25,000 new jobs by 2025
- 21,500 new homes by 2025
- £2.9bn Gross Value Added by 2025

The following projects are expected to be delivered as a result of the WLEP's initial £47m Growth Deal allocation awarded on 7<sup>th</sup> July 2014:

- **Hoobrook Link Road:** This is a joint local transport project with the Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership enhancing the redevelopment of former British Sugar site (providing new business and housing development space) and enabling faster transport links for local business.
- **Malvern Hills Science Park:** The development of space for existing high tech / cyber security business and enabling more space for new businesses on the park.
- **Centre of Vocational Education:** This project will provide support for engineering apprenticeships and vocational training by providing space and facilities in partnership with a specialist training provider.
- **Southern Link Road:** This involves transport improvements tackling congestion along a critical route south of Worcester, opening up sites for employment and housing growth in the county.
- **Flood Alleviation:** This will address the negative transport impacts on Worcestershire businesses and homes through a package of road resilience improvements to reduce the impacts of flooding.
- **Worcester Tech Park** (i.e. Worcester Six): This will fund the infrastructure access to the Worcester Tech Park / Worcester Six employment site, a 72ha site adjacent to Junction 6 of the M5 that will provide new space for manufacturing, offices, research and development and logistics businesses.
- **Superfast Broadband:** This will involve an extension of the Superfast Broadband Roll Out Programme providing improved broadband internet access to the rural areas of Worcestershire.
- **Worcestershire Parkway Station:** a new mainline station for Worcestershire improving connectivity and journey times to major centres, including London.
- **Kidderminster Railway Station:** this will include improvements to the station enabling better sustainable transport links and connectivity for Kidderminster.

A further tranche of Growth Deal funding was announced on 29<sup>th</sup> January 2015, included £7.2m awarded to the WLEP to be spent on three programmes:

- **Employment and Housing Infrastructure Fund:** This programme will be used to unlock the development potential of sites across the County through the provision of infrastructure. This will provide at least 24ha of serviced development land by 2020 and include the following projects:

- Evesham Vale Park, comprising on site and off site works for a business park/employment land with an agri-tech focus
- Redditch Eastern Gateway, comprising off site highways works to access a 16 ha Game Changer employment site in North Worcestershire.
- **Business Growth Fund:** This programme will offer capital grants to SMEs, largely in our key sectors, to remove barriers to business growth to include refurbishment of premises, new premises, new equipment, etc.
- **Skills Capital Fund:** This programme will develop capital skills projects that address the skills gaps in the County preventing business growth.

A third tranche of Growth Deal funding was announced on 9<sup>th</sup> March 2017, including £17.5m awarded to the WLEP to be spend on projects including:

- **A38 corridor improvements** to speed up journey times and accelerate the delivery of housing and job growth in the area.
- **Pershore Northern Link Road** developments, which will enable development of commercial land and provide access for up to 700 new homes.
- **Churchfields** Urban Village highway infrastructure, which will relieve traffic congestion along A456 and A51 and provide access for up to 300 new homes.
- **Engineering Centre of Excellence**, a new Engineering Faculty working in partnership with Heart of Worcestershire College, which will see an extra 300 students per annum by 2021.

## Monitoring Plan

The monitoring and reporting of performance metrics is required by the WLEP to ensure the effective management of WLEP funded projects through a clear understanding of project performance and the delivery of outputs and outcomes in return of WLEP investment. As a result of this, the monitoring of performance metrics is required to ensure that the public funding allocated and awarded by the WLEP is managed in adherence to good governance and any issues in project delivery can be addressed appropriately.

As outlined throughout this document, the WLEP seek to achieve the following further objectives through the monitoring of projects:

- Provide evidence for the delivery of the scale of WLEP impact, as set out through strategic objectives within WLEP documents (set out within the WLEP Strategic Economic Plan, European Structural Investment Funds (ESIF) Strategy, WLEP Business Plan and any other WLEP group strategy or plans).

- Provide evidence for the successful delivery of fund-specific targets, for example as established for the Worcestershire Growth Deal within the Growth Deal Funding Agreement between the WLEP and Government (a summary of the targets of this agreement are outlined above in the “Introduction” section of this document).
- Inform the ad-hoc use of the WLEP Executive with regards to any other initiatives where the aggregated delivery of economic outputs and outcomes would be valuable for intelligence or communication (for example to Government).

Monitoring is required to ensure that projects and programmes are delivering in accordance with approved outputs, inputs and timescales. This monitoring is based around three types of metric, as outlined below:

- Core / required metrics – these are derived entirely from guidance from the Department of Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS). They cover key topics surrounding the project’s delivery and will inform monitoring and evaluations within central government.
- Supplementary metrics – these will be collected on specific projects where identified to be beneficial due to information required from monitoring, or for future benefit towards an evaluation. The collection of any supplementary metrics is to be agreed by the WLEP Executive Team and the respective project board.
- Process metrics – in essence, a form of supplementary metric, but refers to anything required in further detail by the WLEP Executive Team from a project lead in order to gain further insight into project delivery. In some cases additional process metrics may be required for a specific process evaluation subsequent to project completion. For example, where multiple LEPs have an interest in a single project, and the process of working collaboratively should be reviewed and learned from where necessary.

The core metrics of each project are reported to Government by the WLEP on a periodic basis. For example, for the Worcestershire Growth Deal, monitoring information is returned at the start of the last month of each quarter; this information will reflect the project as of the end of the previous quarter (for example, the monitoring return expected at the start of December would refer to the project status as of the end of September).

The supplementary and process metrics for each project are expected to be returned on a timescale agreed between the WLEP Research Executive and the respective Project Lead. It is not the intention of the Worcestershire LEP to disproportionately monitor a funded project beyond what can be reasonably expected and provides clarity of project performance and good governance of public funding.

The metrics expected from each WLEP funded project will be outlined within the Funding Agreement and Business Case or Full Application of the respective project. As outlined within the “Requirements for WLEP Projects” section below, the Monitoring and Evaluation Plans will make reference to a clear record of metrics expected from Project Leads.

## **Evaluation Plan**

Evaluations serve to review the efficiency and effectiveness of projects in achieving their desired outcomes and impacts. This allows the funder to recognise the success of a project in achieving its original objectives and ensuring future projects can replicate and enhance on previously documented successes and that lessons are learned.

This plan sets out the objectives, guidelines and background information for WLEP funded projects through Growth Deal funding within the 2015 to 2021 period. This document should be adhered to as a guideline for Project Leads of WLEP funded projects when creating Evaluation Plans and conducting or procuring an evaluation of a WLEP project.

This plan is intended to align with:

- The WLEP Monitoring Plan, outlined above, sets out the WLEP’s expectations in performance monitoring from Growth Deal projects.
- The WLEP Strategic Economic Plan; of which covers the WLEP’s 2015 to 2025 economic strategy and objectives in detail.
- Respective funding agreements and project application forms for each WLEP Growth Deal funded project.
- The summary list of WLEP projects at the start of this document.

## **Introduction to evaluations**

Evaluations are recommended to be prepared in advance and be both proportionate and selective enough to ensure the size, value and scope of a project is accounted for when considering assessment. Evaluations do not seek to duplicate monitoring information, or produce in-depth coverage where unnecessary, but instead seek to answer specified relevant and questions about the success of a project.

Evaluations can be separated into distinct questions that aim to assess success of objectives of a project. Broadly, evaluation questions can be separated into one of four categories:



- *Process evaluation*: an assessment of what aspects of the project contributed towards delivery of project outputs.
- *Theory-based evaluation*: asks how the intervention succeeded by testing the effectiveness of mechanisms that were expected to be the key drivers of impact.
- *Outcomes evaluation*: asks whether outcomes moved in the desired direction and often includes contextual information to test non-project influences.
- *Impact evaluation*: asks whether the intervention had any impact on observed outcomes, providing a key component of assessment of both cost-effectiveness and cost-benefit.

Impact evaluations are seen as particularly valuable due to the quality of information they bring (for example, they may help provide greater clarity on whether new jobs on an unlocked commercial site are the result of displacement from neighbouring areas), however they are often the most technically challenging to implement.

The Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) have produced guidance for LEPs on writing evaluation plans for their overall growth deal programme. This guidance is recommended to adhere to as a comprehensive guide to evaluation that establishes what can be reasonably expected on many Growth Deal projects. Project Leads of WLEP funded projects are recommended to contact the WLEP Research Executive for a copy of this evaluation guidance.

Other LEPs have produced proportionate Monitoring and Evaluation Plans that clearly identify the type and level of detail necessary for these documents. [The GFirst LEP Evaluation Plan](#) is considered an example of proportionate best practice that Project Leads may wish to reflect on in part when producing their own Monitoring and Evaluation Plans:

The [Better Evaluation website](#) is an excellent source of guidance and resources for those conducting an evaluation or writing an evaluation plan. The [What Works Centre for Local Economic Growth](#) (WWCLEG) produce comprehensive reviews of evaluations produced previously on specific economic development topic areas (e.g. infrastructure). It is envisaged that the detail and resource required to complete evaluations to this standard may not be proportional to many of the WLEP's Growth Deal projects, however the WWCLEG should still be viewed as a source of substantial best practice and [produce a detailed guide of how to evaluate projects on their website](#).

## Objectives

With respect to the Growth Deal, the WLEP aims to assess the success of its Growth Deal allocation on the basis of the outputs and outcomes it has directly and indirectly delivered, and ensure that lessons can be learned for future rounds of the Growth Deal, and future local funding for economic growth.

The WLEP has the following objectives for evaluating all Growth Deal projects:

- To understand whether individual Growth Deal projects have achieved their objectives and delivered good value for money, and whether they have contributed towards the successful implementation of the WLEP Strategic Economic Plan.
- To provide accountability for the Growth Deal investments, by testing the relationship between relevant outputs and outcomes and project investment.
- To assist in the development of more effective projects in the future and communicate any lessons that should be learned from Growth Deal project implementation.
- To establish a case for further devolved powers or funding that can be for the benefits of Worcestershire's economy.

To match these objectives, the WLEP require evaluations to be guided by the following principles:

- Projects requiring larger amounts of funding are expected to be more thorough and detailed in their evaluation.
- Projects that target areas where little is known about previous similar interventions or best practice will provide the most valuable information to local and national partners.
- Monitoring arrangements on Growth Deal projects should be put in place early on and be robust enough to ensure, at least, an outcome evaluation of the project.

Proportionality is critical to WLEP Growth Deal evaluations, as the WLEP does not expect detailed or comprehensive evaluation in any scenario unless the Project Leads elect to conduct one, or an external requirement of the funding or project is that it undertakes a more comprehensive evaluation (e.g. this could be due to the scale of the project / amount of funding as set out in the principles above).

## Requirements for WLEP Funded projects

The WLEP requires an evaluation completed on each project that tests that the objectives, stated within the Full Application or Business Case for each project, have

been achieved once the project and its associated outcomes have been delivered. These evaluations should also reflect the objectives and principles set out within the 'Objectives' section of this document.

The WLEP also require a Monitoring and Evaluation Plan for each project to document what sort of evaluation will be conducted and related details (outlined below), and what monitoring metrics are required to be reported on each project. The timeframe and detail of these evaluation plans should be discussed and agreed between the respective Project Lead and the WLEP Research Executive.

It is recommended for Project Leads to structure their Monitoring and Evaluation Plans around the example template provided by BelS and found within in Appendix A as a guideline of the information that they should include. As an outline, the WLEP expect the following information to be included, with details to be discussed with the WLEP Research Executive:

- Description. A summary of what will be delivered on site, the breakdown of costs, outcomes and outputs, and delivery timeframe (incl. wider context and reference to forecast output and outcome delivery).
- Logic model. A model that clearly illustrates how the following areas link together to form the project's intended impact on outputs and outcomes. A recommended approach would be to briefly detail how the following areas are linked in sequence:
  - Contextual conditions (i.e. existing economic conditions, e.g. a high youth employment etc.)
  - Key policy conditions (e.g. strategic fit with WLEP objectives, or existing programmes and policy of external organisations)
  - Project objectives and rationale
  - Inputs
  - Activities / what is being delivered
  - Outputs
  - Intended Outcomes and impacts (i.e. the policy and contextual conditions addressed)
- Monitoring requirements for the project. This section should serve two functions, firstly to outline clearly the metrics that will be reported to the WLEP on the project, and also to identify the required metrics and data that will be used to inform the project's evaluation.

- Implementation. Basic details on the resource and timing of an evaluation, including contact details of the evaluation lead.
- Summary of analysis. What method(s) of evaluation will be applied, and to test which objectives. It is advisable to set out a series of questions that the evaluation is expected to test – for example, for investment into creating more commercial space for business investment, and it may be within the scope of the project to test the amount of new businesses on site due to foreign investment, from key sectors, and the number and broad value / salary of the jobs created within the county.

Matching the WLEP's focus on proportionality of evaluation, it is expected that an outcome evaluation, utilising the monitoring metrics agreed between the WLEP and the Project Lead will be the most appropriate form of evaluation for most projects. This is a guideline and will not necessarily apply to all projects or Project Leads, as another method of evaluation may be more applicable or projects may wish to combine two different methodologies to evaluate their project to best fit with the objectives of that project.

It is the responsibility of the organisations receiving funding to resource the collection of relevant monitoring metrics and the completion of Monitoring and Evaluation Plans and evaluations. The WLEP Research Executive will assist in areas as highlighted within this document and where appropriate to facilitate the production of high-quality plans, evaluations and efficient monitoring processes. Any difficulties experienced through an organisations limited resource or capability to monitor or evaluate their WLEP funded project is expected to be raised with the WLEP Research Executive.

Other examples of proportionate Evaluation Plans and previously completed evaluations are referred to above in the "Introduction to Evaluation" section of this plan.

A record of existing Monitoring and Evaluation Plans can be found below within the "Project Monitoring and Evaluation Plans" section within this document.

### **Governance and quality**

The following section outlines the arrangements the WLEP Executive has in place to ensure good governance and quality of project delivery (linked via the monitoring of performance information from projects) and project completion and evaluation (principally, the assessment of the economic impact of WLEP projects once completed).

These arrangements do not supersede any arrangements in place by organisations of which have successfully bid for WLEP funding for any project. In fact, it is expected and challenged by the WLEP Executive that each organisation bidding for funding can ensure that WLEP investment results clearly in demonstrable project

outputs and outcomes. To this end, the governance and quality arrangements below are in place internally and should be seen as complementary to the governance and quality assurance each organisation ensures with a WLEP funded project.

Any organisation submitting a proposal for WLEP funding on a project will be required to submit a Strategic Outline Business Case to the WLEP. The WLEP Executive will undertake a strategic fit assessment to ensure that any project aligns with the WLEP strategic objectives (set out within the WLEP Strategic Economic Plan, European Structural Investment Funds (ESIF) Strategy, WLEP Business Plan and any other key strategic plans or targets, e.g. the expected outcomes of Growth Deal investment outlined at the start of this document). Projects that meet the strategic fit assessment are subsequently priorities on the basis of the level of their strategic fit, deliverability and Return of Investment, in respect to the ability of the project to provide clear economic outputs and outcomes relative to its proposed cost in WLEP funding (this process of Programme Entry is described in more detail within the WLEP Assurance Framework).

The WLEP Executive tracks performance on Growth Deal projects on a regularly basis and reports performance on these projects to the WLEP Board. The WLEP Executive will also ensure the completed evaluations are available publically as evidence of what has been achieved through WLEP investment.

The WLEP Board, amongst other responsibilities outlined within the WLEP Assurance Framework, is responsible for good governance and ensuring the delivery of projects funded under by the Worcestershire LEP.

The WLEP reserve the right to investigate potential sources of external, objective support to provide an independent review of the evaluations conducted on WLEP projects. This will not be intended to provide disproportionate expectations of evaluation against projects, but to present the WLEP with advice to improve the quality of evaluations. Where an external reviewer has been identified to provide objective input into evaluations, the WLEP Executive will discuss and agree arrangements with the respective Project Lead in advance.

## Dissemination

The WLEP will disseminate evaluation information to the key partners involved in a particular project (these are to be listed within each project Evaluation Plan), BeIS and the network of LEPs. For this purpose, within Evaluation Plans, Project Leads are required to record known stakeholders and clarify whether other individuals are considered relevant project stakeholders for their involvement in project delivery, project development or any other interest in the project (e.g. those who may be reasonably impacted by the delivery of the project or may benefit from lessons learned from the evaluation).

It is required in each project's funding agreement that any publicity or promotion is to be agreed in advance with the Worcestershire LEP Communications and PR Executive. It is expected that evaluation dissemination and communication of the key messages from evaluation form a part of this publicity and promotion.

Once completed, each evaluation will be promoted by the WLEP and hosted on the WLEP website. The use of this information may be proportional to the scope of the project evaluated, or the topics of the evaluation. For example, the process evaluation aspect of the Hoobrook Link Road evaluation will be discussed between GBSLEP and WLEP. Outcome evaluation is expected to take longer, but may be shared with the partners involved in similar projects where there is best practice and lessons to be learned from projects delivery. Likewise, where early insights, such as monitoring information throughout project delivery, may assist WLEP policy it will be shared amongst relevant partners.

### **Project Monitoring and Evaluation Plans**

Once agreed between the WLEP Research Executive and the respective Project Leads final Monitoring and Evaluation Plans will be available here.

## Appendix A - Information for each planned evaluation

### *Title of Intervention*

**Description:**

**(150 words)**

*Summary of the main outputs expected*

*Costs, delivery timeframe, wider delivery context*

*Expected outcomes and impacts?*

**Logic Model:**



**Type(s) of Evaluation:** *Process, outcomes or impact, or a combination?*

### Data Requirements

Metric	Frequency	Source
<b>Inputs:</b>		
1.		
2.		
3.		
<b>Outputs:</b>		
1.		
2.		
<b>Outcomes:</b>		
	<i>Ex ante trend required?</i>	
1.		
2.		

**Inputs:**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

**Outputs:**

- 1.
- 2.

**Outcomes:**

*Ex ante trend required?*

- 1.
- 2.

### Implementation



**Resourcing:**

**(50 words)**

*How much will the evaluation cost and how will it be funded?*

**Timing:**

**(100 words)**

*When will key activities take place - including baseline work, interim and final findings?*

**Who Conducts**

**Name:**

**Address:**

**Telephone:**

**Email:**

**Summary of Analysis**

**Description**

**(200 words)**

*What evaluation method will be applied?*

**Uses of the Evaluation**

**(100 words)**

*Who is the audience for the evaluation and how will fundings be used?*