

LIVERPOOL CITY REGION COMBINED AUTHORITY

To: The Metro Mayor and Members of the Combined Authority

Meeting: 21 January 2022

Authority/Authorities Affected: All

EXEMPT/CONFIDENTIAL ITEM: No

KEY DECISION No

REPORT OF THE MONITORING OFFICER

NATIONAL LOCAL GROWTH ASSURANCE FRAMEWORK

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report provides an updated National Local Growth Assurance Framework ('NLGAF'). The Liverpool City Region Combined Authority ('LCRCA') has modified the April 2019 version, to reflect any changes in its structure and operations, and in particular any changes in local arrangements and in national guidance.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority:
- (a) note the contents of this report;
 - (b) note that confirmation from Government is awaited regarding Adult Education sections of the draft National Local Growth Assurance Framework (NLGAF), as appended to this report; and
 - (c) subject to receipt of comments from Government, approve the updated NLGAF, a copy of which has been provided in Appendix 1.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 HM Government requires Mayoral Combined Authorities ('MCAs') with a Single Pot of funding and Local Enterprise Partnerships ('LEPs') to develop their own NLGAF.
- 3.2 The NLGAF sets out how the LCRCA and LEP will make use of public funds, in a way that achieves value for money and inclusive growth for the Liverpool City Region ('LCR'). There is a particular focus on the Strategic Investment Fund ('SIF') and the Investment Strategy, which concentrates on good growth for the LCR.

3.3 In September 2021, HM Government republished the NLGAF guidance, with a number of small amendments, largely based on the LEP arrangements. These include the following:

- Drafting updates to text that was out of date or required amendment, such as Schedule 2 of the NLGAF which looks at the funding awards to LCR LEP and decision-making powers;
- Inclusion of the Getting Building Fund, Mid-Year Reviews, and of Pan Regional Partnerships;
- Updates to both the Department for Transport and Department for Education annexes;
- Updates to areas that have caused query from stakeholders – notably: clarity that MCAs should engage the department with reviewing their Local Assurance Framework; clarity on the expenses register; clarity on codes of conduct; clarity on co-opted board members and overall board numbers; clarity on delivery plans and annual reports.

3.4 Other amendments made to the NLGAF include the following:

- Changes throughout the NLGAF by our Internal and Audit colleagues, to embed clear governance arrangements and risk management.
- Structural and operational changes within the Combined Authority ('CA'), such as the change of post from Interim Executive Director of Strategic Commissioning and Delivery to Executive Director of Investment and Delivery.

3.5 The new guidance also provided an update to the changes reflected in the Green Book: appraisal and evaluation in central government. The amendments and changes from 3.3-3.6 have been taken into account in the updated NLGAF, where applicable.

3.6 Confirmation was received by HM Government that all Departments have signed off the NLGAF, save for the Department for Education ('DfE'), who required further visible changes to the NLGAF, to reflect more of the governance and administration of the Adult Education Budget ('AEB'). As a result, a final version was submitted in December 2021 to Government, implementing these AEB changes. Their response may be known in advance of the CA meeting in January 2022 and be verbally reported to Members.

4 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Financial

There are no identifiable financial implications in relation to the contents of this report.

4.2 Human Resources

There are no identifiable human resources implications in relation to the contents of this report.

4.3 Physical Assets

There are no identifiable physical asset implications in relation to the contents of this report.

- 4.4 Information Technology
There are no identifiable information technology implications in relation to the contents of this report.

5 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no identifiable legal implications in relation to the contents of this report.

6 RISKS AND MITIGATION

- 6.1 By not approving the recommendation within this report, there is a risk that the Combined Authority will not have the updated policies and processes in place, to ensure there is that robust stewardship of public funds, which Government requires from MCAs and LEPs.
- 6.2 There are no identifiable risks and mitigation implications as a result of adopting and publishing the updated NLGAF.

7 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 There are no identifiable equality and diversity implications in relation to the contents of this report.

8 PRIVACY IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 There are no identifiable privacy implications in relation to the contents of this report.

9 COMMUNICATION ISSUES

- 9.1 If the updated NLGAF is approved, the document will be made available on the Combined Authority website.

10 CONCLUSION

- 10.1 The updated NLGAF improves on the April 2019 version and provides an up-to-date overview of the Combined Authority's structure and operations. The Combined Authority will continue to behave in a pro-active way, in order to comply with the provisions of the NLGAF.

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Appendices:

Appendix 1 – LCRCA National Local Growth Assurance Framework January 2022

Background Documents:

None