

Appendix B – Clarifications from DLUHC to SELEP Queries on LEP Integration Technical Guidance

August Guidance	Issue raised	Response
Local Growth Fund and Getting Building Fund. Where a LEP ceases to operate, its Accountable Body will subsume any loan books and be responsible for ongoing monitoring requirements.	<p>The Accountable Body, Essex County Council and the other UTLAs agree that it is not practical or desirable that one Accountable Body remains for the LEP area, once the LEP has closed and its governance arrangements ceased.</p> <p>It was requested that Government release ECC as Accountable Body and agree to six, or three (as to be decided by UTLAs) Accountable Bodies from April 2024. (It should be noted that a formal letter has been sent to DLUHC in relation to this).</p> <p>It was also requested that Government clarify what the expectations of an Accountable Body are going forward.</p>	<p>Provided it is in line with local agreements to be set out in the integration plan, Essex can be released from role if the geography is agreed but best to wait till the end of the financial year to reduce complications (as the LEP is still the delivery body until then). The LEP team will ask other area teams and assurance about actual process for this.</p> <p>In response to future expectations: UTLAs will receive and distribute the 24/25 funding allocation for the whole area (in line with agreements made as part of their integration plans) and be responsible for any M&E/assurance requirements. Monitoring of GBF and LGF continues to March 25.</p>
The National Local Growth Assurance Framework (NLGAF) will remain in force and will continue to apply up to a reasonable point before integration. In principle, the LEP should adhere to the requirements for as long as they are applicable. For all LEPs that have	<p>It was requested that Government clarify what they consider a 'reasonable point'.</p> <p>It was also requested that Government clarify what framework,</p>	<p>This has not been directly clarified. However, the following was stated: On LEP assurance and associated requirements for 2023/24 we have set out that a light-touch Annual Performance Review (APR) assurance cycle will take place in 2023/24 where LEPs are still operational.</p> <p>Government will publish an Assurance Framework in due</p>

integrated into local institutions, or do so in 2023-24, the English Devolution Accountability Framework (EDAF), 2023 applies to the integrated organisation.	if any, local authorities will need to comply with, if devolution deals are not in place by March 2024.	<p>course setting out the assurance process required to be delivered. We understand this will be an amended version/ amendment to the EDAF and UTLAs will need to adhere to this as of 1st April 2024.</p> <p>No date has yet been provided for when we will receive this. A reasonable expectation would be January 2024, alongside the further guidance promised.</p>
In areas where there is no devolution deal, government expects local authorities to work together to ensure seamless Growth Hub provision.	It was requested that Government confirm the allocation of funding for 2024/25 at the earliest opportunity to enable not only an effective establishment of Accountable Body functions but also the time for considered procurement to ensure continuity of service, where needed.	Not clarified directly; however, the response stated: The level of funding for 2024/25 will be subject to future Department for Business and Trade spending decisions. We will inform those MCAs/Local Authorities delivering Growth Hubs, and LEPs and their Accountable Bodies where integration has yet to take place, once decisions are made.
Wherever possible, government expects local authorities to work together to deliver LEP functions within potential devolution deal geographies (whole county or functional economic areas with a minimum population of 500,000, in line with the principles set out in the Levelling Up White Paper)	What support is there from Government to aid local discussions about functional economic areas, as per the guidance thresholds.	No FEA further guidance, but Government will not provide funding to areas that intend to deliver LEP core functions at a lower-level geography (i.e., below whole county or functional economic area).