

DRAFT MINUTES

DORSET LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP BOARD

28 NOVEMBER 2024 FROM 10.00 AM TO 11.40 AM

VIRTUAL TEAMS MEETING

MINUTES

Board Attendees:

Cecilia Button (CB) (Chair)
Ian Girling (IG)
Keith Phalp (KP)
Nick Gaines (NG)
Cllr Richard Biggs (RB)
Selina White (SW)
Cllr Simon Clifford (SC)

Also Present:

Aidan Dunn (AD) (Dorset Council)
Chris Shepherd (BCP Council)
Kathryn Hill (KH) (Dorset LEP)
Rebecca Davies (RD) (Dorset LEP)
Vinita Nawathe (VN) (Dorset LEP)

Apologies:

Cllr Millie Earl (ME)
Nicola Newman (NN)
Neil Skelland (NS)
Paul Gough (PG)
Phil Sayles (PS)

Item	Notes and Decisions	Action
1.	<p>Apologies were received for: Cllr Millie Earl, Neil Skelland, Nicola Newman, Paul Gough and Phil Sayles.</p> <p>Declarations of Interest: no declarations of interest were declared.</p>	
2.	<p>Chair's Update</p> <p>CB updated that the work of the Great South West has been continuing. The second GSW Westminster event was held on Monday 11th November focusing on energy security and the launch of the refreshed Energy Prospectus. Among the speakers at the event was Lord Hunt, Minister of State for Energy Security, and Tom Hayes MP, the newly appointed missions champion for clean energy.</p> <p>CB mentioned that the recent budget stated Government are minded not to fund PRP's going forward and if anyone was minded to write to Government in support of the Great South West it would be a good thing to do.</p> <p>CB updated on OneHealth and that there have been four challenge panels held over the last few weeks, each one with a different company. Each of those companies received great advice from the panel participants from Bournemouth University, Arts University Bournemouth, University of Southampton, Innovate UK and the LEP Chair, as well as advice on funding. These reports will be circulated soon.</p> <p>CB mentioned the Getting Back to Work White Paper and that this was an something we could be considering</p>	
3.	CIC Business	
3.1	<p>LEP Functions Integration</p> <p>VN spoke to the paper and a discussion took place.</p>	
3.2	<p>Dorset LEP Skills Report</p> <p>RD explained that the Skills paper is mainly looking at the Digital Skills Hub and the Careers Hub.</p> <p>RD pointed out that the National Report, produced this week, on apprenticeships and education features Dorset and that the Careers and Enterprise Company (CEC) have been making a difference. DLEP have received an award of £120,000 in the last few weeks to deliver a Work Experience feasibility project and will be working with the CEC to deliver work experience for those who find it difficult to secure a placement. We will work with over 20 schools from now until the end of July and hope to bring in more businesses and make schools aware of how they can link into businesses. We recently had a very good teachers encounter, visiting the Lighthouse where they were able to look at all aspects of the Lighthouse business.</p> <p>RD mentioned that the Digital Skills Hub is still working with asylum seekers and continues to be very busy on Community Tuesdays. RD described working with the NHS ICB looking at employability, linked to the More and Different programme, with mini interviews planned on the day, along with workshops</p>	

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3.2	<p>Dorset LEP Skills Report Cont'd</p> <p>and wellbeing support to help people with next steps. If this day is successful in January, we will look at how to replicate it in the west of the county.</p> <p>RB said he thought the Teachers Encounter project was really interesting, taking teachers to businesses and wondered why the Lighthouse.</p> <p>RD explained that we are doing six different sectors and the Lighthouse was about the digital business sector but it is also covered hospitality and is a charity. The approach this year is think about the subjects in schools and then think how they are used in different parts of the business. up so teachers can experience the full range.</p> <p>SW agreed this is a great initiative and mentioned how to raise the view of housing and all the different types of roles that they offer. She said they are on site in Portland at the moment and working with Weymouth College. She offered to be a business to visit and can also connect with other housing businesses across the region if needed.</p> <p>CB wanted to note the Board's congratulations to the Careers Hub Team for all the good work they are doing.</p> <p>RD mentioned that the Skills Board met in September and they started a discussion about what will happen with the Board in the future. Everyone around the table was keen for it to continue. There is a meeting in January and they will need to make a decision on how to take that forward.</p>	
3.3	<p>Dorset LEP Business Report</p> <p>RD spoke to the Business update.</p> <p>She was pleased to confirm that the Chancellor, in the budget, had confirmed that Growth Hubs will continue. She said the report shows all the programmes that we are currently running and that we have added an extra one in the last couple of months. The Health & Social Care Innovation and Supply Chain work was tendered and supported. We are looking at how we bring more businesses into the supply chain and bring in more resilience into that area.</p> <p>SCT is making developing plans for how we deliver this for next year and will work with our local authority partners on how we take this forward from April 2025.</p> <p>We recently held a "Meet the Funder" event in October which has been very well received and we are hoping to do more in January/March. We received very positive feedback from funders who confirmed that they met businesses that they had not spoken to before.</p> <p>CB said she has received feedback from businesses saying how great it was to have all the funders in the room.</p> <p>CB noted the Board's thanks to SCT for all her hard work.</p>	

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4.	For Noting	
4.1	<p>Executive Director's Update</p> <p>VN mentioned that she submitted a response into Government on the industrial strategy. She explained that this is a green paper and asking about methodology. What comes next will be interesting. She said we have encouraged the projects around Portland to put in a response and both Dorset Council and BCP Council also put in a response.</p> <p>CB stated that one of the benefits of working as part of the GSW is the MP engagement via the APPG for the South West, as this keeps the information flowing into Westminster.</p>	
4.2	<p>Board Member Updates</p> <p>CB stated that the Get Britain Working white paper is interesting, as there may be some funding linked to it. There could be an opportunity to bring money into the area and asked is that something we want to bring back to the January meeting.</p> <p>Action: RD to a look at the White Paper and bring any suggestions back to the January Board meeting.</p> <p>CS mentioned he was working with the Connect to Work programme. He had been part of a meeting earlier on in the week on how BCP Council work with Skills and Learning on being a joint partnership.</p> <p>Action: CS to work with RD to work out whether this is the same as the Get Britain Working or in addition to it and bring something back to the January Board meeting.</p> <p>CB asked the Board if they had received any feedback on the impact of national insurance rise for small businesses.</p> <p>CS said he had not heard anything formally, nobody had written in to BCP Council about it, but they knew there was going to be an impact for the Council related to the suppliers supplying them with critical services, like passenger transport services. Those services will be difficult to run with these additional costs.</p> <p>IG updated that there is a lot of negative feeling from the business community around the legislation changes. The NI increases have been received terribly from the business community and there are huge concerns businesses will stop recruitment, cut their workforce and stop investment. He informed that the Chamber has put out a survey in the last couple of days and received 65 responses already. He said they know of one business facing a wage increase of over £100,000. He has written to all the town chambers in Dorset asking them to distribute the survey to their members, so they can gather the information to submit to the Dorset MPs. He also informed that the sexual harassment legislation has kicked in already and they think this has been missed, so they will be putting out information on this.</p>	<p>RD</p> <p>CS/RD</p>

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	<p>Board Member Updates Cont'd</p> <p>CB mentioned that the charity sector is also concerned about the impact.</p> <p>SC informed that Dorset Council are having to make provision for increases from suppliers. He also said that with charities, you cannot pass costs on to customers, so they will have to let paid employees go.</p> <p>SC went on to update on devolution. He said that they have submitted their expression of interest with Somerset and Wiltshire and have updated it to include a mayor. They decided it was pointless to continue without having a mayor as it is clear that no mayor, no money.</p>	
5.	Minutes from the Last Meeting	
	The Minutes were agreed as an accurate reflection of the last meeting. There were no matters arising.	
6.	Any Other Business	
	RD asked whether board members could ensure that any comms relating to LEP future and especially in relation to staff changes wait until the completion of the staff process (week commencing 17 December). She suggested anyone wishing to share comms follows the LEP lead.	

Note: Date of Next Meeting - 28 January 2025 at 1.30 pm