

DORSET LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP BOARD MEETING
28 NOVEMBER 2024 FROM 10.00 AM TO 11.40 PM
VIRTUAL MEETING

AGENDA

Time	Item	Subject/Title	Presenter
10.00	1.	Apologies and declarations of interest	Cecilia Buffon
10.05	2.	Chair Update (verbal)	Cecilia Buffon
	3.	CIC Business	
10.10	3.1	LEP Functions Integration – Outcome of staff consultation with staff HR advice. For agreement	Vinita Nawathe
10.50	3.2	Dorset LEP Skills report	Rebecca Davies
11.00	3.3	Dorset LEP Business report	Rebecca Davies
	4.	For Noting	
11.10	4.1	Executive Director's update (verbal)	Vinita Nawathe
11.20	4.2	Board members individual updates (verbal)	All
	5.	Minutes from the Last Meeting	
11.30		Approve Minutes and actions from November Board Meeting and matters arising	Cecilia Buffon
11.35	6.	Any Other Business	

The Annual General Meeting of the Dorset Local Enterprise Partnership CIC to follow

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

The papers for agenda Item 3.1 are not included as they are Commercially Sensitive

DORSET LEP BOARD MEETING

Meeting Date	28 November 2024	Item Number	3.2
Security Level:	Confidential <input type="checkbox"/>	Commercially Sensitive <input type="checkbox"/>	Unclassified <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Paper Title	Dorset LEP Skills Update		
Recommendation	None – for information only		
Papers are provided for:	Decision <input type="checkbox"/>	Discussion <input type="checkbox"/>	Information <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

1. PURPOSE

This paper provides an update from the Dorset Skills Board (DSB) together with operational updates on the contracted LEP skills delivery.

2. DORSET CAREERS HUB CONTRACT UPDATE

Dorset Careers Hub (DCH) Performance and Delivery Overview

- DCH achieved a 100% Compass (Gatsby Benchmark assessment) completion rate at the end of the 2023-24 academic year.
- In 2023-24 DCH's performance was in the top quartile nationally for four of the eight Benchmarks, performance against the remaining Benchmarks was split evenly between the 2nd and 3rd quartiles.
- This data was used to inform and support 2024-25 planning and delivery.
- In October, a '2024-25 Launch Event' was held for 18 Dorset Council Careers Leaders and teachers.
- 15 employers attended an online 'Recruitment and Talent Employer Forum' focussing on increasing quantity and quality of applications to apprenticeships and entry level vacancies.

Teacher Encounters:

In the 2023-24 academic year, DCH delivered encounters to 23 teachers with visits to JP Morgan, NHS (Bournemouth) and AFC Bournemouth, exceeding targets for engagement. Following a successful bid, delivery of a further Teacher Encounters project for 2024-25 is underway. Although the target of 30 encounters appears challenging, the first visit in November to the Lighthouse Poole is already oversubscribed, proving a demand for these activities and a need to embed the opportunity in subsequent years. This year's project also includes visits to the NHS at Dorset County Hospital in January and to AFC Bournemouth for a 'Careers in Maths' day in March 2025.

Cornerstone Employer Group:

Dorset's Cornerstone Employer group welcomed a new member and Chair in September, Ed Locke from YTL Group (Wessex Water). With Ed's support, the groups outputs for this year includes:

- Use the Employer Standards self-assessment framework to underpin all activity

- Support delivery of sector specific events, including delivery of workshops to provide meaningful employer encounters
- Deliver a programme of activities to support all stakeholders (young people, teachers and parents/carers) to understand and prepare for recruitment processes in the current landscape. This will include an employer panel event for parents in the spring term.

Primary Project: Start Small - Dream Big

In July 2024, Wave 2 of the Primary Project, involving mainly Dorset Council Primary schools was completed. Over 3950 children aged 4-11 experienced an employer encounter and many schools have continued to embed careers within their curriculum.

Delivery for Wave 3 is underway to a further 23 primary schools mostly across the BCP area. Lead Teachers attended an introductory session in September and are now planning their employer encounter.

September Steering Group Meeting:

The Steering Group, under the guidance of the Chair, David Matthews, has reviewed the focus and outcomes and supported DCH to increase collaboration and communication with the Group's membership. September's meeting benefited from the inclusion of presentations about the different approaches to NEET reduction within both council areas.

3. DIGITAL SKILLS HUB CONTRACT UPDATE

Digital Skills Hub is delivering to target and in line with the contract. Achievements since the last Board meeting include:

Good Things Foundation filming with Gail Porter
 Basic courses continued delivery with Wix websites and ChatGPT as new topics
 Business campaign has reached in excess of 28,000 Instagram accounts
 Masterclass series has full sign up
 Business drop in on Monday's has seen an increase in numbers with a monthly workshop included
 Basic to intermediate digital skills courses – courses full through to December, and sign ups open through to March.
 Labour Market Information event was well attended and has provided new partnership work.

The KPI update was 30 Sept. The project is delivering to budget as set in the contract with BCP. The latest KPI's reported were:

Project Deliverables	Target: 2021-2026	Achieved to date (as at 30/09/24):
# of full-time equivalent (FTE) permanent jobs created through the project	2	1.4
# of full-time equivalent (FTE) permanent jobs safeguarded through the project	1	0.5
# of potential entrepreneurs assisted to be enterprise ready	114	51
# of enterprises receiving non-financial support	393	1337
Number of closer collaborations with employers	165	68

Number of customers/ businesses using the Hub *(includes community use)	10281	7078 (plus 38,719 business engagements on social media)
Number of qualified new learners in new courses (shared with virtual skills app)	640	111
Number of referrals to existing courses and facilities	8884	2903
Number of new learners enrolled on existing courses and facilities (shared with virtual skills app)	1500	141

There is risk to the successful delivery of the project post 31 March 2025 and the continued successful delivery is being worked through with BCP Council.

4. DORSET SKILLS BOARD

The Board met in September and the following is shared as a highlight report:

Nicola Newman, Chair, provided an update from Skills England including their report published to drive growth and widen opportunities. It was noted the report was based on evidence and existing evidence. Translation of this into policy and practice will be key.

The Board discussed whether there is something collective that can be done to support recruitment, particularly in the HE / FE space, but also health and social care, and other challenged sectors. A wide range of ideas were presented, and it was agreed the opportunities exist to work collaboratively to impact on this challenge.

Labour Market information update was provided. The full report is available <https://www.dorsetlep.co.uk/userfiles/files/Skills/LMI/LMI%20Q3%202024%20%232.pdf>

The skills opportunities aligned to the investment activities at Portland Port were shared. The need for specialist skills and local longer employment opportunities were noted. Providers collaboration will be key to ensuring provision of workforce for an investment of this scale.

The Skills Board is a LEP Board sub committee. With the expected changes to the LEP after March, NN would like to continue to convene and chair the DSB either until the end of June next year or until a new plan for delivery of LEP functions is agreed.

Members also provided updates to aid collaborative working and opportunities. Full details of the meeting can be found at <https://www.dorsetlep.co.uk/userfiles/files/Governance/Committee%20Meetings/SAPB/Dorset%20Skills%20Board/October%202024/Dorset%20Skills%20Board%20Minutes%20-%20Oct%202024%20DRAFT.pdf>

5. RECOMMENDATION

None – for information only.

DORSET LEP BOARD MEETING COVER SHEET

Meeting Date	28-11-24	Item Number	3.3
Security Level:	Confidential <input type="checkbox"/>	Commercially Sensitive <input type="checkbox"/>	Unclassified <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Paper Title	Dorset LEP Business report		
Recommendation	The board are recommended to consider and note this report		
Papers are provided for:	Decision <input type="checkbox"/>	Discussion <input type="checkbox"/>	Information <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

1. PURPOSE

To brief the Board on delivery, activities and developments related to business growth and inward investment within Dorset LEP.

To give assurance the board regarding delivery against the DBT Growth Hub grant.

This report supports Dorset LEPs strategic objective for business growth and attracting inward investment to increase employment opportunity and raise productivity of businesses across the region.

2. SUMMARY

Growth Hub Delivery 24/25

The bi-annual report was submitted ahead of deadline with the following outputs achieved as of 30/09/24:

- Light touch – 144 (annual target 200)
- Medium intensity – 79 (annual target 100)
- High intensity – 3* (annual target 60)

*This is expected at the 6 month mark as most 12+ hours of support will be recorded during H2.

The following programmes are live:

Bid Writing Support (to encompass 3 elements)

Horizon Scanning Service - to help businesses identify potential funding sources via private investors, angel investor groups, SWIF, government grants e.g. Innovate UK, DCMS etc.

Bid Writing Support - to provide support to businesses who have identified a grant they wish to apply for. This has been utilised for Marine and Maritime Launchpad Round 2 and businesses in Dorset & BCP are expected to have been successful this time.

Bid Writing Masterclasses – to deliver masterclasses to provide hints, tips and strategy of writing compelling bids for Innovate UK and other Government funding. 2 of these were specifically for Marine and Maritime Launchpad Round 2.

Business Growth Groups

A peer support programme to help 40 businesses identify, plan, and implement business growth

and productivity actions. 4 sessions per group, 15 hours of support per business. This programme has a focus on Advanced Engineering & Manufacturing, Marine & Maritime, Digital Creative and Visitor Economy established Dorset businesses with growth potential.

Funding and Investment Readiness

A programme of support to help businesses to ensure they have everything in place to successfully apply for investment from private and government sources investors, angel investor groups, SWIF, Innovate UK, grants etc including finance information, pitch decks etc. Two sessions to focus on start-up funding and two sessions on growth / scale-up funding with one business from each session hand-selected for additional one-to-one financial support. This will result in 40 interventions and will run Jan to March 25.

Funding Accelerator

A part-funded programme of support to help 10 businesses to demystify the investment process, break down barriers and create a level playing field. This programme provides businesses with the tools and techniques they need to encourage investors to back the business. The programme includes three "sprint" sessions, one-to-one support and pitch practice and feedback. 12+ hours of support for each business.

Digital Technology for Productivity Programme

A programme of specialist-led digital tech, productivity and innovation advice and support for 25 businesses (12 hours). This programme is aimed at SME manufacturers in Dorset and will provide organisations with an internationally recognised benchmark assessment which includes a suite of frameworks and tools to help start, scale and sustain manufacturing transformation.

Supply Chain development

A programme of events to help Dorset companies identify new opportunities within their Advanced Engineering & Manufacturing, Digital Creative and Marine & Maritime business that would benefit the Defence & Security Supply Chain across the SW region and beyond. Events to cover awareness of the sector, opportunities, introductions, networking and funding for Defence & Security sector resulting in 100 interventions.

Innovation & Supply Chain – new opportunity

A programme of events to help Dorset companies identify innovation and supply chain opportunities within Health & Social Care sector across the SW region and beyond. Events to cover awareness of the sector, opportunities, introductions, networking and innovation funding resulting in 100 interventions.

These programmes are in addition to the **business signposting service, CRM management and DBT reporting** (monthly, bi-annual and annual).

The **DLEP Business LinkedIn page** is very active with 1559 followers as of 14th Nov (up from 1524 in Sept).

Considerations for 25/26 and beyond

Consistent Business Support Across Dorset and BCP

To ensure balanced economic growth it is essential that all SMEs in Dorset and BCP have fair and consistent access to the same high-quality business support. Equal access promotes inclusivity, reduces economic inequalities and helps unlock the full potential of the SME sector leading to an increase in innovation, productivity and growth across Dorset. A consistent approach also streamlines processes, reduces confusion and maximises resource efficiency as well as strengthening the Dorset brand.

Inward Investment

Dorset needs an adequately funded, resourced and supported inward investment strategy to attract businesses, create jobs, stimulate economic growth and improve its standing within the GSW and the UK. Inward investment brings significant benefits, including increased employment opportunities, enhanced local infrastructure, and increased capital and innovation into the area.

Other Activity

Team Member Update – Shelley Collins-Trevett recently gained the Lean Six Sigma Yellow Belt and became a Live Well Dorset Champion. Clare Fleming is due to complete the Lean Six Sigma Yellow Belt in Nov.

Maritime UK South West - Dorset LEP continues to support MUKSW both in their capacity of the Marine and Maritime network and support organisation for the South West region and as the Cluster Management Organisation for the Marine & Maritime Launchpad funded by Innovate UK. Dorset LEP presented at the most recent MUKSW event in Dorset in partnership with the European Space Agency Maritime Decarbonisation Funding team.

Supply Chain Futures Lab – Dorset LEP partnered with Pale Blue Hat, Bournemouth University, Barclays Eagle Lab, The Harbourview Construction Company and Laceys Solicitors to deliver this well attended event in November. Groups worked on scenarios related to building a resilient Dorset and Southern region supply chain ecosystem, by maximising strength in 'place' and seeking cross-sector opportunities. The full output report and next steps is expected by year-end.

Inward Investment – www.investindorset.com is being updated regularly with additional content including business case studies.

Working with DBT partners, BCP Council and Dorset Council the team work to share resource and provide an effective support service for inward investors under the Invest In Dorset (IID) brand.

Dorset LEP lead on the review and updates to DBT Propositions to ensure representation for Dorset.

Innovate UK Marine and Maritime Launchpad – Dorset LEP have worked closely with Innovate UK, Maritime UK SW and GSW teams to deliver Round 2 of this high-profile funding opportunity - £7.5m pot for projects related to Clean Maritime, Digital Oceans and Marine Autonomy. Dorset LEP were the only organisation to hold events specific to Dorset businesses to highlight the opportunity with relevant businesses. Round 2 is now closed with applicants informed of outcomes in Nov. Two Dorset businesses are expected to receive funding out of 13 Dorset-led bids (**NB this information must remain confidential**). In comparison Round 1 received 5 Dorset-led bids with 0 funded.

British Business Bank – Dorset LEP held a sold-out Meet the Funder event in Oct 24. This was sponsored by British Business Bank and included speakers from Dorset Business Angels, Barclays Eagle Labs and British Business Bank. FSE Group also attended and 15 businesses benefited from a one-to-one session with a member of the Dorset Business Angels team. A further, sector-specific event is planned for Q1 2025 as well as holding additional Meet the Funder sessions in West Dorset and North Dorset.

Fintech West South Coast Hub – the hub continues to grow with the fourth event attracting over 100 delegates. A Fintech round table was held in October and Dorset LEP has sponsored the Fintech Ecosystem Report for Dorset which is due by year-end.

Local Nature Recovery Strategy – Dorset LEP is the representative for and link to business on the steering group for this initiative led by Dorset Council. The strategy is in the process of being finalised and signed off with the next step being implementation across the county.

Dorset Ambassadors – the most recent event led to new Ambassadors signing up formally and the next event takes place in Feb 2025 at Hall & Woodhouse Brewery.

South West Investment Fund – DLEP continue to promote this £200 million fund for the South West region.

Digital Skills Hub – we continue to provide support for the business elements of the hub in particular Business Mondays, masterclasses and accelerator programme.

GSW – we continue to work closely with the GSW team on several initiatives including the upcoming Made Smarter Programme (25/26), Internationalisation Programme Board, Manufacturing Investment Plan, Marine & Maritime Launchpad.

UK SPF – BCP Council and Dorset Council UK SPF Programmes continue and are very popular; Dorset LEP regularly refer to these schemes and businesses are referred onto DLEP funded programmes.

Future Farming Resilience – working with Devon County Council and Business Information Point we are driving forward the delivery of support for farmers across Dorset.

Clusters / Programmes – Dorset LEP continue to play an active role in several clusters / programmes including South West Regional Defence & Security Cluster, Maritime UK South West, Tech South West, South West Agri-Tech, South West Aquaculture Network.

South West Agritech Showcase – planning is underway for the next annual event which is planned for March 2025.

3. RECOMMENDATION

None – for information only

DORSET LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP BOARD

24 SEPTEMBER 2024 FROM 1.00 PM TO 4.30 PM

HELD AT THE BATTLELAB, DORSET INNOVATION PARK, WOOL, DT2 8GB

MINUTES

Board Attendees:

Cecilia Buffon (CB) (Chair)
Keith Phalp (KP)
Cllr Millie Earl (ME)
Nick Gaines (NG)
Phil Sayles (PS)
Selina White (SW)
Cllr Simon Clifford (SC)

Also Present:

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

Apologies:

Aidan Dunn (AD) (Dorset Council)
Ian Girling (IG)
Neil Skelland (NS)
Nicola Newman (NN)
Paul Gough (PG)
Cllr Richard Biggs (RB)

Item	Notes and Decisions	Action
1.	<p>Apologies were received for: Ian Girling, Neil Skelland, Nicola Newman, Paul Gough, Richard Biggs and Aidan Dunn</p> <p>Declarations of Interest: no declarations of interest were declared.</p>	
2.	<p>Chair's Update</p> <p>CB gave an update on the recent Great South West (GSW) event. It was a very successful day for networking and support with over 500 delegates in attendance. It is less than 2 years since receiving recognition for the GSW, so it is doing very well. Three years recognition was received and a £1.5 m budget. There are also new members to the All Party Parliamentary Group with the new MPs in the area. The Economic Intelligence Report for the GSW has also recently been launched and VN was involved in that piece of work. NS, ME and Alison Honor, Vice-Chancellor of Bournemouth University, are on the GSW Board.</p> <p>There was a Dorset Ambassadors event that took place on 17 October and we had the two Bournemouth MPs attend. These MPs are getting more involved. We had some feedback on the day for the Strategy and businesses on the day showed that they want to be involved.</p> <p>CB informed the Board that the Dorset Career Hub is in the top 10 careers hubs in the country and is getting national recognition for their work.</p> <p>She also updated that the LEP Network has recently rebranded and is now called the Business Board Network.</p>	
3.	<p>CIC Business</p>	
3.1	<p>Nominations And Remuneration Committee</p> <p>CB welcomed Professor Keith Phalp to the LEP Board and explained that he is replacing Jim Andrews as the Bournemouth University Board Member. KP has taken over from Jim Andrews as Chair of the Nominations and Remuneration Committee</p> <p>She went on to welcome Selina White to the LEP Board and explained she has replaced Paul Read as the Housing representative on the Board. She thanked SW for stepping in, even though we only have a small time left.</p> <p>CB mentioned that Aaron Lawes was the Business British Bank representative for the LEP and as he has left the Board, we might need someone to cover that role.</p>	
3.2	<p>Finance, Audit and Corporate Risk (FACR) Committee</p> <p>NG spoke to the finance paper and accounts. He informed that the outturn position will be close to the budget. He assured the Board that the FACR Committee go through the accounts line by line.</p>	

Item	Notes and Decisions	Action
3.3	<p>LEP Functions Integration</p> <p>A discussion took place on the integration of the LEP functions into the local authorities. CB said that the intention is to hand over in March 2025 to another Business Board and for them to utilise the funds for economic growth in Dorset. We need to make sure we have a Business Board to hand over to.</p> <p>VN explained to the Board how the Somerset and Wiltshire LEP went forward and reiterated what the guidance from Government has been.</p> <p>CB said we need to provide a paper explaining how we will complete the work as described so the Board can see what is going to happen. We need to give this Board assurance that we can hand over in an orderly fashion.</p> <p>Action: ME said they would provide assurance for the Board as to what that looks like.</p> <p>Action: VN to set up an Extra Ordinary Board meeting the second week of October to go through the papers explaining how to take forward the closing of the company.</p>	<p>ME</p> <p>VN</p>
3.4	<p>Dorset LEP Skills Update</p> <p>RD spoke to her paper and highlighted a couple of items.</p> <p>She informed that the Dorset Careers Hub was ranked in the top 10 in the country for careers hubs last year and this reflects all the hard work being done in the area.</p> <p>She updated on the Boscombe Digital Skills Hub and that there are really good outputs in the community.</p>	
3.5	<p>Dorset LEP Business Update</p> <p>RD updated on the business support and that all our programmes are full. There are businesses based in both the BCP and Dorset Council areas attending these programmes.</p> <p>PS stated that the Skills and Business Update reports are good reports are a useful summary of all the work happening within the team.</p>	
4.	Policy	
	<p>Strategic Economic Planning – Consultation Draft</p> <p>VN updated on the Strategic plan. She highted that Dorset is the third worst for growth over the last 20 years. Our working age population is aging faster than others. At the Homes and Economy conference we heard from employers struggling with attracting and keeping staff because of problems with housing. SW informed that the average age of the first time buyer is now 41.</p> <p>PS mentioned that the graph on the age of the population is really powerful. It is important to get the right programmes in the colleges and universities to attract people for right jobs. Overall, the document is really helpful and provides a good base of evidence and information that will feed through.</p>	

Item	Notes and Decisions	Action
4.1	<p>Strategic Economic Planning – Consultation Draft Cont'd</p> <p>JS informed that the mayoral combined authority areas will be asked to submit their industrial strategies soon. Guidance will be published for the non-mayoral combined authorities for their industrial strategies over next few months.</p> <p>SW stated that part of this is about the population. We have a problem with housing in this area at the moment and that will affect productivity. She informed that with house prices, the lowest is 7 x house price to earnings and the highest is 20 x house price to earnings.</p> <p>In both productivity solutions, the local region economy is affected by lack of housing.</p> <p>ME explained that BCP have a lot of approved homes, 15,000 homes, but it is the viability that is the problem. We have places where homes can go and plans that have been approved but making it viable is a problem for BCP.</p> <p>Action: all confirmed they were happy for VN to socialise the document further and she asked for people to send any more comments to her.</p>	VN
4.2	<p>Portland Port – Developments And Opportunities</p> <p>Ian McQuaide, General Manager of Commercial at Portland Port, gave a presentation and overview of the port to the Board. Portland Port stands out due to its deep waters and it can accommodate the biggest ships along the south coast, other than Southampton. Their development of a new deep water berth was completed in 2023/24. He went on to present on the future projects planned at the port.</p> <p>CB up to us locally to pull together all this information to join up with the Great South West. We need to make sure we are front and centre for projects for Government.</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	
	There was no other business raised.	

Note: Date of Next Meeting - 28 November 2024 at 10.00 am