

DORSET LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP BOARD MEETING

6 JUNE 2024 AT 10.00 AM TO 12.30 PM

VIRTUAL MEETING

AGENDA

Time	Item	Subject/Title	Presenter
10.00	1.	Apologies and declarations of interest	Cecilia Bufton
	2	For Discussion	
10.05	2.1	Integration Group Update and Next Steps	Cecilia Bufton
10.35	2.2	Outturn 2023/24	Nick Gaines
10.40	2.3	Budget and Delivery Plan 2024/25	Nick Gaines
	3	For Discussion	
10.55	3.1	Update on Strategic Economic Priorities	Vinita Nawathe
	4	For Noting	
11.10	4.1	Business Update	Rebecca Davies
11.15	4.2	Skills update (verbal)	Rebecca Davies
11.25	4.3	Chair Update (verbal)	Cecilia Bufton
11.40	4.4	Board Member Updates (verbal)	All
	5	Minutes from the Last Meeting	
12.00		Approve Minutes and actions from November Board Meeting and matters arising	Cecilia Bufton
12.05	7.	Any Other Business	

Note: Date of Next Meeting – 18 July 2024 at 10.00 am to 12.30 pm

DORSET LEP BOARD MEETING COVER SHEET

Meeting Date	6 June 2024	Item Number	2.1
Security Level:	Confidential <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Commercially Sensitive <input type="checkbox"/>	Unclassified <input type="checkbox"/>
Paper Title	LEP Integration Group - update and next steps		
Recommendation	The board are asked to consider and discuss the paper.		
Papers are provided for:	Decision <input type="checkbox"/>	Discussion <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Information <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

1. PURPOSE

To update the board on the work of the LEP integration task and finish group and to get a steer on next steps.

2. SUMMARY

The LEP integration plan submitted to DBT in November 2023 laid out the intention for the LEP to continue delivering its core functions through the period 2024/25 and for a task and finish group to consider and recommend options for delivery post March 2025 and to manage the transition towards the agreed way forward. The group has met officially three times, officers more frequently. While the task and finish group embarked upon operational considerations, clarity of strategic direction is needed.

This paper lays out:

1. Background: board decisions to date and start of the task and finish group
2. An outline of the current LEP functions and revenue funds, and the staffing and/or contractual parameters of each.
3. Four strategic options for the future of the Community Interest Company (CIC)

A summary table of the options is below.

Reference to LEP revenue funds in this paper does not refer to GPF capital.

3. RECOMMENDATION

The board are asked to consider and discuss the paper.

The papers for agenda Item 2.2 are not included as they are Commercially Sensitive

The papers for agenda Item 2.3 are not included as they are Commercially Sensitive

DORSET LEP BOARD MEETING COVER SHEET

Meeting Date	6 June 2024	Item Number	3.1
Security Level:	Confidential <input type="checkbox"/>	Commercially Sensitive <input type="checkbox"/>	Unclassified <input type="checkbox"/>
Paper Title	Strategic Priorities Update		
Recommendation	The board is recommended to consider the work in progress.		
Papers are provided for:	Decision <input type="checkbox"/>	Discussion <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Information <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

1. PURPOSE

To update the board on the strategic economic priorities work.

2. SUMMARY/BACKGROUND

In August 2023, Government announced that responsibility for delivering LEP core functions (including business engagement and economic planning) would transfer to MCAs or Upper tier LAs across a functional area. In Dorset it was agreed that the LEP would continue to deliver these functions for 2024/25. One of the requirements from DBT for 2024/25 is that an updated strategy document, building on the work formerly done by the LEP, should be published on the lead LA's website by October 2024. It is likely that evidence based local growth strategies for functional economic areas will be required whatever the outcome of the general election.

Dorset LEP had already begun a refresh of the economic evidence base, and the LEP board agreed a timeline for the LEP to develop a strategic economic priorities document on behalf of the LAs as part of the required DBT delivery, to include consultation with stakeholder groups before presenting to both councils to take through their processes. This work coincides with a wider independent economic review being undertaken at a GSW geography and the current development of local plans, transport plans and economic strategies. This document should align with, inform, and be informed by, their development.

Guidance

The Government published guidance for the development of these documents ¹, which highlights the need for them to:

- Be underpinned by a strong evidence base;
- Look to identify local economic opportunities (including areas of comparative advantage) and challenges;
- Identify opportunities for strategic directions across regions.

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/guidance-for-local-authorities-delivering-business-representation-and-local-economic-planning-functions>

- cover an appropriate long-term timeframe;
- cover whole county geographies or functional economic areas with a minimum population of 500,000; and
- be informed by and where possible developed alongside other local plans.

The LEP has undertaken work in response to the above guidance as well as a recognition that our Local Industrial Strategy (published in 2019) was due for review.

Purpose

The purpose of the document is threefold:

- to articulate a shared sense of direction for the Pan-Dorset area, so that businesses, partners and stakeholders in the area can get behind it and take co-ordinated action to achieve it;
- to communicate our collective ambitions to stakeholders beyond the area and identify ways that we can work with partners in other geographic areas to further joint objectives (e.g. the Great South West, Central South and Western Gateway); and to identify investment priorities for the area which will help us to lay the groundwork for future funding bids and a potential devolution deal with Government if there is the appetite to pursue one.

Area Covered

The area covered by this work is the pan-Dorset functional economic market area, which includes both the Dorset Council and Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council areas. This geography reflects the need to make policy on a scale which reflects people's working, commuting and social patterns – people often cross administrative borders every day as they go to work, shops and access services.

These two authorities became unitary authorities in April 2019 and have since worked together on a range of joint strategic planning processes including:

- a joint local transport plan;
- an employment land review;
- minerals and waste plans;
- the joint strategic needs assessment (health);
- local nature recovery strategy;
- local housing needs assessment.

Alongside this, our record of joint working also includes the Dorset Integrated Care Partnership – 'Our Dorset'. 'Our Dorset' is a partnership between the NHS, councils, public services and voluntary and community partners working together and is one of the most advanced integrated care systems in the UK.

However, we also recognise the need to work with partners beyond our immediate boundaries in order to:

- take advantage of wider opportunities (e.g. promoting opportunities which span an entire region such as the Great South West or Central South); or

- tackle issues which require a co-ordinated response (e.g. north-south transport links).

Therefore, we draw on evidence from across the region and highlights relevant opportunities for working at a regional scale.

Collective voice

Whilst the strategy has been drafted by the LEP on behalf of the Local Authorities, it represents the collective voice and ambition of the whole area. 'We' therefore refers to this collective voice, rather than the LEP or one single organisation.

Methodology

The first step in this process has been to conduct a full review of the economic data and trends affecting our area, this will be provided in an Appendix 1. This has informed discussions with the LEP board which have helped to shape the vision and priorities set out in this document.

Following the last board meeting, the following represents an emerging draft taking on board feedback.

3. RECOMMENDATION

The board is recommended to consider the work in progress.

DORSET LEP BOARD MEETING COVER SHEET

Meeting Date	06-06-24	Item Number	4.1
Security Level:	Confidential <input type="checkbox"/>	Commercially Sensitive <input type="checkbox"/>	Unclassified <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Paper Title	Dorset LEP Business 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

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

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 funding delivery 23/24 (Dorset LEP Business)

The annual report was sent to DBT ahead of deadline, all **outputs** were exceeded:

- Light touch – 286 (target 200)
- Medium intensity – 110 (target 100)
- High intensity – 86 (target 60)

Survey

We conducted a customer satisfaction survey which was sent to all businesses with an intervention during FY 23/24 and received the following results:

- 92% of responders were satisfied, very satisfied or extremely satisfied with the support provided by Dorset LEP/delivery partners
- 88% of responders were likely to recommend this service to another business or colleague

A selection of the comments from responders:

Everything and everyone was and is great! (CJ Harrington - Chris Harrington, 24-Apr-2024)
The workshop was a really useful thing to undertake and David from Evolve was very knowledgeable. (Weissman - Sebastian Harterink, 24-Apr-2024)
Silicon South are a really useful resource for creatives in the South (Justine Wyness Ltd - Justine Wyness, 24-Apr-2024)
Really great course put on by Evolve at the great location, AUB Innovation Studio. (Talent Drive - Poppy Lister, 24-Apr-2024)

Shelley was really helpful (Steve Utley Business Consultancy - Steve Utley, 24-Apr-2024)
Kevin was really helpful in shaping our applications for funding and reviewing our draft applications prior to submission. Our applications were successful and our community cinema is expanding which is likely to lead to us taking on two new staff members in due course. (Rex Cinema - David Evans, 25-Apr-2024)
The sessions were well delivered and facilitated reflection and goal setting. (Reidsteel (John Reid & Sons Ltd) - Donna Campo, 29-Apr-2024)
Thank you for the support provided, very much appreciated. (Grapevine Telecom (Bath) Ltd - Liam Toms, 30-Apr-2024)
I thought the session was well facilitated with a good mix of businesses. (Satori Ops - Steph Lucas, 02-May-2024)

Completed Dorset LEP funded business growth programmes:

- **Bid Writing Support Service** – this popular programme continues to provide expertise on bids to Innovate UK and other Government / other funds. 7 bids were supported (3 x Innovate UK, 4 Foundation/Charity grants) with **6 successful bids** – Innovate UK Decarbonisation Fund, Innovate UK Creative Catalyst, The Alice Ellen Cooper Dean Charitable Foundation, Dorset Council Capital Leverage Fund and WTC Community Fund - total **£332K**.
- **Dorset Business Innovation Programme** – Evolve and Silicon South delivered programmes to deliver practical and theoretical innovation support to **40** businesses.
- **Funding / Investor Readiness Programme** – Evolve delivered four events for start-up and growth businesses (**50** businesses) supplemented by one-to-one specialist support where a need was identified.
- **Funding Accelerator Programme** – DLEP part-funded **4** places on this highly-regarded programme with Focused for Business. All businesses are now actively seeking investment with one selected to pitch to Dorset Business Angels.
- **Business Growth & Productivity Groups** – this peer support programme delivered by Evolve has supported **40** businesses across four key sectors (Engineering & Manufacturing / Marine & Maritime / Digital & Creative / Visitor Economy) with strategic growth, leadership, business performance and productivity.
- **Horizon Scanning Service** – this programme helped businesses navigate the complex landscape identify suitable funding opportunities.
- **Bid Writing Masterclasses** – small group masterclasses were delivered for three key clusters (SWRDSC, DEMC, Digital Creative). Bid Writing and Horizon Scanning was delivered by Brooks Kebbey.
- **Investor Readiness Pilot Programme** – this workshop attracted **25** businesses. Feedback was excellent and this programme was developed into a series.
- **Strategic Business Review Pilot Programme** – this programme provided **5** businesses with one-to-one specialist advice and support.

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 1486 followers as of 20th May (up from 1456 in March).

Growth Hub Delivery 24/25

Activity has commenced on the following four programmes:

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 will be utilised for Marine and Maritime Launchpad Round 2.
- 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 will be 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.

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. This will result in 40 interventions.

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.

Procurement is underway for 2 additional programmes:

- **Digital, Productivity & Innovation Programme** - a programme of specialist-led digital tech, productivity and innovation advice and support for 25 businesses (12 hours).
- **Supply Chain development** - a programme of events to help Dorset companies identify new opportunities within their AEM, Digital Creative & Marine & Maritime business that would benefit the Defence & Security Supply Chain across the SW region and beyond. This could include manufacturing, digital, cyber etc. Events to cover awareness of the sector, opportunities, introductions, networking and funding for D&S sector resulting in 100 interventions.

Other Activity

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 across Dorset.

Innovate UK Marine and Maritime Launchpad – Dorset LEP are working closely with Innovate UK, Maritime UK SW and GSW teams to launch Round 2 of this high-profile funding opportunity - £7.5m pot for projects related to Clean Maritime, Digital Oceans and Marine Autonomy. Two events, organised by Dorset LEP in partnership with Innovate UK, MUKSW, BCP Council and Dorset Council were held in May to highlight the opportunity with relevant businesses.

British Business Bank – Dorset LEP are hosting a Meet the Funder event in Oct 24. This is being sponsored by British Business Bank and will include speakers from Dorset Business Angels, Barclays Eagle Labs and British Business Bank.

Dorset Ambassadors – the most recent event was held on 27th March at AECC, the next event will be held late summer.

South West Agritech Showcase – this event took place on 21st March, Dorset LEP managed all the event bookings as well as building the agenda as part of their role on the Steering Group.

Fintech West South Coast – Dorset LEP has partnered with BCP Council and Fintech West to launch the “South Coast Hub” of Fintech West in Dorset. A third event is being held in June.

South West Regional Angel Development Programme – Dorset LEP worked with Tech South West and other LEPs, Combined Authorities and Local Authorities across the wider-SW region on this initiative on regional angel network development.

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 in conjunction with BCP Council. Dorset LEP Communications Manager is on the Comms and Engagement Working Group.

South West Investment Fund – DLEP continue to promote this £200 million fund for the South West region. Meetings have been held with the fund managers FSE Group to identify opportunities for increased referrals from Dorset.

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

UK SPF – BCP Council and Dorset Council UK SPF Programmes continue and are very popular with grants already paid out to successful applicants. Dorset LEP regularly refer to these schemes.

Future Farming Resilience – working with Devon County Council and Business Information Point we are driving forward the delivery of support for farmers across Dorset. GSW region is still the highest performing region in England on programme registrations and engagements.

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

3. RECOMMENDATION

None – for information only

DRAFT MINUTES

DORSET LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP BOARD

28 MARCH 2024 FROM 10.00 AM TO 12.30 PM

AT DIGITAL SKILLS HUB, 30-32, ROYAL ARCADE, CHRISTCHURCH RD, BOSCOMBE, BH1 4BT

MINUTES

Board Attendees:

Cecilia Buffon (CB) (Chair)
Cllr Millie Earl (ME)
Nick Gaines (NG)
Nicola Newman (NN)
Paul Read (PR)
Phil Sayles (PS)
Cllr Vikki Slade (VS)

Also Present:

Clare Fleming (CF) (Dorset LEP)
Joe Saffer (DLUHC)
Jon Bird (JB) (Dorset Council)
Rebecca Davies (RD) (Dorset LEP)
Shelley Collins-Trevett (SCT) (Dorset LEP)
Vinita Nawathe (VN) (Dorset LEP)

Apologies:

Aaron Lawes (AL)
Aidan Dunn (AD) (Dorset Council)
Anwen Jones (AJ) (Cities and Local Growth Unit)
Ian Girling (IG)
Jim Andrews (JA)
Luke Rake (LR)
Neil Skelland (NS)
Paul Gough (PG)
Cllr Simon Gibson (SG)
Cllr Spencer Flower (SF)

Item	Notes and Decisions	Action
1.	<p>Apologies were received for: Jim Andrews, Cllr Spencer Flower, Cllr Simon Gibson, Neil Skelland, Ian Girling, Aidan Dunn, Luke Rake and Anwen Jones.</p> <p>Declarations of Interest: No declarations of interest were declared.</p>	
2.	<p>Chair's Update</p> <p>CB noted good feedback and discussions coming out of the Homes & Economy Conference; a successful Dorset Skills day; and Jet2 arriving at Bournemouth airport.</p> <p>CB outlined the One Health cluster bid which has been submitted as a result of the LEP convening a One Health Enterprise Network steering group and LEP officer commitment. The bid is led by BU with Bristol University (in light of their vet school), and Southampton University (providing time in kind). An EPSRC bid for just under £2.5m over 4 years.</p>	
	<p>Board Members' Update</p> <p>NS provided an update via CB:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AUKAS has chosen BAE Systems to build its submarines. We should be building BAE Systems and Atlas Electronik into our strategic thinking. • Also considering what a deal with CTPPP might mean to businesses in Dorset. • He will be going to IndoPac 24 and is working to build the defence and security cluster. • Noted that base load electricity supply is a real and growing issue for businesses on the west side of the county. • Acknowledged that GSW has a good focus on defence, energy and food security. • NS is hosting a session at Ocean Tech in Plymouth in June <p>PR updated the board on the MMC and Digital Skills Weymouth which is training and educating around 40 people from 20 companies around off site manufactured housing and with a focus on zero carbon.</p> <p>NN reported on the Dorset Skills Day. A good experience that they would like to repeat. A learning outcome was that employers like to hear from other employers. There was great support from providers. Meeting with DFE, who are positive, about next steps. They are today issuing new priorities for the sector and are collectively working on a report to the Skills board for the beginning of June.</p> <p>VS gave evidence in parliament on Tuesday as a vice chair to the Local Government Association about the future of high streets, towns and small cities, promoting the work in Poole as one of her case studies. VS also referenced the Accommodation BID. Encouraging signs that hoteliers will vote for the BID which provides a £2 levy on qualifying hotels. Money is held by the BID (with a range of stakeholders on the board) for destination marketing, events and work to uplift the area. First in the UK for leisure and tourism (Liverpool and Manchester are around business). There should be a knock on for the rest of Dorset. CB noted this is good to hear.</p>	

Item	Notes and Decisions	Action
3	Policy	
3.1	<p>Economic Strategy and Evidence Base</p> <p>EB outlined that the purpose of the document is to have a clear position over what we want to achieve and alignment over priorities. There is a balance of being too focussed and keeping it broad enough to provide a useful basis for bids.</p> <p>VN noted this will be an institutional-facing strategy document. The evidence base refresh and request for a strategy comes towards the end of the Comprehensive Spending Review and in an election year. We want to ensure alignment with Council strategies and ownership by the councils on whose behalf we are pulling this together. DBT's grant for LEP functions requires a refreshed area strategy looking forward ten years to be published by the councils in October. The aim is to get a straw man consultation draft out for wider consultation with stakeholder groups in order to give a consulted upon draft to the Councils in summer to take through their processes. It takes into account the local council plans and will provide priorities for intervention and opportunity. This session is an opportunity to consider and steer the direction of the first draft.</p> <p>EB has circulated the evidence base, which aims to cover the broad issues and looks at long term trends, and an outline start of a strategy document with a draft vision of where we want to be in 10 – 20 years' time, which acknowledges current and previous strategies and conversations with the Board. EB noted later in the discussion that the evidence base draws data from ONS and other sources. EB encouraged questions and feedback.</p> <p>PR spoke of the recent Competition and Markets Authority Report on housebuilding noting that it shines a light on the fact that the current housebuilding model is not focussed on the needs of an area but has evolved over time around house types and uses of land. There is also an assumption that existing housing stock will keep going, not acknowledging the existing decline. The Net Zero agenda might help to provide some of the solution. This needs to be reflected in the evidence base.</p> <p>NG queried who uses the evidence base and how we can make it more useful to them. He has a concern that we create something and assign an unvalidated value to it. In business such a document would need to be concise.</p> <p>RD noted she uses it for bid applications.</p> <p>CB noted that if an opportunity comes up, we have this evidence base to use. A shorter, briefer document is what will finally be presented – but this is a comprehensive background. We'd be expected to have this kind of knowledge and understanding of pan-Dorset.</p> <p>EB reassured the board, in response to a note from JB, that there is a trace of sources and references and CB noted these would be stored separately to the document.</p>	

Item	Notes and Decisions	Action
3.1	<p>Economic Strategy and Evidence Base Cont'd</p> <p>NN agreed that there needs to be a really solid evidence base. Her experience of using evidence is that it is a revelation – especially to employers. She also acknowledged that it had to be relevant to be of value.</p> <p>CB noted that when the labour market data was given to the ICP it provided a very good insight into wider factors affecting employment and impacting health and care vacancies.</p> <p>NN noted that the evidence provided at the Homes & Economy Conference was a revelation about the low productivity of the county.</p> <p>VN gave her experience of how such an evidence based approach swings in and out of favour across time / governments. She envisages a swing towards a strong evidence based approach. EB outlined a recent experience on another project in the South West, when Treasury asked for a document they had submitted to be resubmitted with all the references to evidence added. Then once they had been checked, they asked for the published version to remove the references -the point being they wanted to know there was evidence behind assertions.</p> <p>CB noted that we do need to keep in mind the costs and resources we've attributed to this workstream.</p> <p>VS noted that there is a new draft Local Plan for BCP and emphasised the fact that Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole are viewed as distinct towns – not a single city. CB reassured VS that this was noted and would be taken on board.</p> <p>PS recognised the document as a very good body of work that will prove valuable in developing the strategy. However, he wants to understand who the authority will be behind it, who will adopt it and whether it will engage with purposeful activity. Also wants to know how it fits into the integration agenda.</p> <p>VN explained that an update of the evidence base would have been an exercise done by the LEP anyway, but that we are now required to do it, to support the councils in delivering their strategy piece by October. There will be a consultation period with a wide range of stakeholders, but who will drive it forward and secure funds to deliver the long term strategy and delivery plan is to be decided by the people around the table.</p> <p>There followed a robust discussion about the detail of the draft evidence base.</p> <p>Key points:</p> <p>VS emphasised the need to ensure positive language and focus on sectors with opportunities for growth.</p> <p>EB acknowledged the feedback and stressed the differences between the evidence base document and the resulting strategy document.</p> <p>JS noted that it is helpful to consider what the 30 second elevator pitch is as a way of being concise.</p>	

Item	Notes and Decisions	Action
3.1	<p>Economic Strategy and Evidence Base Cont'd</p> <p>NN was curious that some of the sector data didn't reflect the sectors that the LSIP focus on – which are more that those that are considered to be innovative and emerging.</p> <p>PS noted that sometimes high GVA sectors are different from focus sectors. He also raised that there is a piece around there being enough people here – how do we enable human resources that we have to be productive, happy and prosperous. If we can fuel the businesses with high GVA that will have an impact.</p> <p>VN added that we cannot ignore where things are not so positive – where there is a need for intervention. The demographic piece is a complex one that is also national and global.</p> <p>ME picked up on the positive language piece – current low growth is an opportunity for high growth. The data about people moving away needs to be balanced by action to keep them here. How can we look at how tech is evolving, and which business sectors are seeing growth? It's about looking at the non-traditional piece. Perhaps the last 20 years of economic growth hasn't suited Dorset as much as the next 20 years will. ME's portfolio is about belonging and communities. Less focussed on the economic drivers and focussing on the social drivers.</p> <p>NG is interested in the mechanism that creates change. Previous strategies have not stemmed the exodus of young people. Something very different is required. It is also about community and possibility, a sense of activity and place. People move towards areas of high economic activity.</p> <p>CB noted that all the reflections are useful. She reassured the board that this is a working document that will be finessed and that we need to agree on how we use the evidence and how we build the strategy piece. There is a balance between acknowledging what the base line is that makes the area tick and where the opportunities are. CB noted that this piece of work could be a package – of documents, video, talking heads etc. She is interested in whether this document reflects a place we can all recognise.</p> <p>On the draft strategy document:</p> <p>PS noted that we need a document that inspires and motivates. It needs to not just be about long term vision but about what we can achieve in the next 2 – 3 years. It's about also about getting the right language to conceptualise what we have here. He reiterated that we need to focus on the people who are here e.g. reducing benefit bills, attracting funding for doable and innovative activity.</p> <p>VS commented on how, when she has been to parliament, few people can place Dorset. We are well connected – and we need to reflect that – connectivity to London, to Europe, to the rest of the country and digitally. It needs a sense of place, anchored in the centre of the south coast where we look in all directions. It needs positive language to emphasise a wonderful place where we are rethinking the future and accelerating sustainable growth.</p>	

Item	Notes and Decisions	Action
3.1	<p>Economic Strategy and Evidence Base Cont'd</p> <p>NG observed that 10 years is not a long time to change the dial. We can hope to attract businesses if we create an environment that leads to a net influx of businesses, that would be a success. We should point to the uniqueness of what we do have – environment and businesses. We need to be really passionate about just a few outcomes. It needs to speak to actions that are achievable.</p> <p>ME picked up on the uniqueness of what we have in Dorset – the combination of nature / leisure and urban environments. We should also recognise that we have skilled people with young families and people in midlife who are not necessarily looking for the urban environment.</p> <p>VN flagged that there is an issue right through from 18 to 65 – the data presented at the Homes & Economy Conference pointed to those with families who cannot afford to live here. If we can make Dorset a place where families want to live, then we would succeed.</p> <p>JS was supportive of looking at it through the lens of opportunity and growth.</p> <p>NN picked up on the point of working with the human resources we have – we do have some amazing talent – and it can be in the older demographic too. We also need to rise above the south west and the locality of our country – we need to be talking global – people work globally, travel globally – we need to look at international.</p> <p>PR likes the central hub idea – Dorset as a magnetic force, connected and outward looking. Connectivity is positive. We have natural assets all around us. We can build on being a magnetic hub for business.</p> <p>CB: Recognised that affordability is an issue for families – we need to find an innovative way to support people to live here – for example housing connected to jobs. It's also about setting out what we can realistically do for businesses. We must make sure we have the right language around innovation, the sustainable, and natural. Reflecting on the creative piece of work done at the Dorset Ambassador breakfast which spoke to heritage, business, natural, health and wellness. Someone coined the term "Area of Outstanding Natural Business". We need to speak to what people really think of the place and the passion they have for the place. We need to have something that reflects action, passion and enthusiasm. We also need to be able to flex a lot of this depending on who the audience is.</p> <p>Action: EB to update evidence base and strategy outline in line with discussion and new BCP draft Local Plan</p>	EB
4.	CIC Business	
4.1	<p>FACR Update and GPF Proposal</p> <p>NG reviewed the progress against 2023/24 budget which is presented in the financial statement. The FACR Committee reviewed a draft budget for the next 2 years, delivering the services as currently delivered. NG noted that the Task and Finish group will be proposing how the core services will be delivered in the coming years and CB noted that we have to make a decision on that to get it in place by March 2025. NG urged that, whilst there is no immediate need,</p>	

Item	Notes and Decisions	Action
4.1	<p>FACR Update and GPF Proposal Cont'd</p> <p>making decisions earlier rather than later would be advisable. NG noted that the LEP team manage their budget tightly.</p> <p>VS acknowledged that the timeline of any discussions around devolution will not dovetail with the timeline about the future delivery of services and there is an appetite to bring forward that decision.</p> <p>NG noted that any decision about the future delivery of services needs to be a Board decision. The Task & Finish group needs to give the Board the information so that they can make that decision.</p> <p>VN noted that we are not looking for this board to approve the outturn for 2023/24 and the budget was indicative based on assumed funds – it is an illustration of the direction of travel and when we have the final figures it will come to the board for discussion/approval.</p> <p>NG outlined the debate on the Growing Places Fund proposal made to the FACR Committee. With the lack of responses to the last round of GPF, the paper proposed taking action to develop and trial a new approach to providing affordable accommodation to young people working in the county.</p> <p>VN has spoken to the Section 151 Officer to see if this would be part of the scope of the Fund. The original concept for the GPF was about housing and communities. The Section 151 Officer's view is that working up such a proposal would be in scope.</p> <p>VS acknowledged the good intention of the idea but expressed reservation about starting a new project at this point and would like to see the money utilised for something that can be delivered in a shorter timescale.</p> <p>NG noted that the LEP needs to continue to make decisions that benefit the people of Dorset.</p> <p>VN noted that the loan fund sits within a ringfenced account at Dorset Council who loan the money on behalf of the LEP, and ongoing loan liabilities would normally remain with Dorset Council.</p> <p>PS wanted to understand what the parameters of the fund are currently and whether there is scope for changing them to, for example, provide grants to be spent within the year. VN outlined that the GPF was intended as a recoverable fund which set out to unlock infrastructure, housing and jobs. Dorset LEP chose to set it up as a revolving loan for this purpose. If parameters were to change the Section 151 officer would have to approve any repurposing.</p> <p>A lively and challenging discussion followed about the future options for the delivery of services that the LEP provides, the position of the councils, the operational considerations (in particular around the other contracts won by the LEP CIC (Digital Skills Hub and CEC Careers Hub) which continue beyond March 2025).</p>	

Item	Notes and Decisions	Action
4.1	<p>FACR Update and GPF Proposal Cont'd</p> <p>VS flagged that an officer from each council had been asked to look at the assets and liabilities of the LEP and this information will be made available to the Task & Finish Group.</p> <p>NG noted we are awaiting the outcome of the work of the Task & Finish group, legal picture and scenario planning so a decision can be made by the board.</p> <p>ME noted that the scope of the Task & Finish group does not include the future of the LEP, but the delivery of core services.</p> <p>VS requested that both councils bring their position to the next Board meeting.</p> <p>ME requested that the Task & Finish Group be able to progress its work, even if members of the group could not attend meetings. CB suggested any all members of the group should read the papers and respond in writing if they are unable to attend.</p> <p>VN reiterated that in the meantime, the LEP team will continue to deliver their contracted functions as usual. The timeline the board had agreed was for a decision on the future delivery of services by October so arrangements could be put in place for the end of the financial year.</p> <p>PS acknowledged that it is difficult and challenging for those delivering the services to have uncertainty.</p> <p>Returning to the Growing Places Fund, NG noted that any change to the structure of the fund would need to be taken to the Section 151 Officer and agreed by the Board. It was agreed that a paper on the legal position and a range of options for discussion would be brought to the next Board meeting.</p> <p>A discussion was had about the date of the next board meeting to enable most members to attend. It was agreed that meetings should avoid school holidays, but that the next meeting should be moved a week later rather than a week earlier - to early June- to allow time for Dorset's cabinet to have formed.</p>	
5.	For Noting	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CB recognised she has not delivered the shared agenda but this has been a useful discussion. • VS requested that the great work being done by the LEP team and the award won by the Digital Skills Hub should be minuted. • PS wanted it recognised that the board do read the papers and also recognised the work being done. • SCT noted that businesses are asking for support and training and are reassured by it being business as usual for the next 12 months. Businesses appreciate the pan Dorset offering. • CB thanked the board for the meeting. 	

Item	Notes and Decisions	Action
	Other Action Points	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VS to ensure that EB has the BCP draft Local Plan. • VN will share next iteration of the evidence base and strategy document by email as we need to reach out for consultation before getting the document to the councils so it can go through their processes before publication by October. • Local Authority partners to outline their position on the future of the delivery of core services at the next board meeting. • Task & Finish group to work up options for the future ways of working for the next board meeting. This will also look at the future of the GPF. • Task & Finish group members to read papers and submit written responses if they are unable to attend the meetings. • VN and CB to discuss the parameters of the GPF with Section 151 Officer. • VN and CB to seek legal advice on changing the parameters of the GPF and provide a paper on the options for the next Board Meeting. • VN to select a new date for the next Board Meeting – proposed the first week of June. 	<p>VS</p> <p>VN</p> <p>VS/SF</p> <p>CB/VN</p> <p>CB/VN</p> <p>VN/CB</p> <p>VN/CB</p> <p>VN</p>
6.	Minutes from the Last Meeting	
	The Minutes were agreed as an accurate reflection of the last meeting. There were no matters arising.	
7.	Any Other Business	
	There was no other business raised.	

Note: Date of Next Meeting: 6 June 2024 – virtual meeting