

DORSET SKILLS BOARD – DRAFT MEETING MINUTES
MONDAY 27th JANUARY – 14:00 – 16:00 - VIRTUAL MEETING HELD ON TEAMS
Attendees:

Nicola Newman, Chair (NN)
 Jon Bird, Dorset Council (JB)
 Joanna Gale, Seetec Plus (JG)
 Hugh Joseph, Engineering Sector (HJ)
 Rosie Knapper, Dorset LSIP
 David Matthews, Upton Beach (DM)
 Andrea Murphy, Seetec Plus (AM)
 Eleanor Parson, NHS Dorset (EP)
 Sarah Rice, BCP Council (SR)
 Anthony Carr, Bournemouth & Poole College (AC)
 Phil Sayles, Bournemouth & Poole College (PS)
 Ian Jones, Bournemouth University (IJ) for Philip Sewell
 Karen Taylor, DWP (KT)
 Kate Wills, Weymouth & Kingston Maurwood College (KW)
 Rebecca Davies, Dorset LEP (RD(LEP))
 Clare Fleming, Dorset LEP (CF)

Apologies:

Lesley Haig, HSU
 Adrian Gunner, SWRAC
 Philip Sewell, BU
 Penny Sydall, Dorset Council
 Amy Walton (BCP Council)
 Helen Stephenson, Dorset LEP
 Rod Davis, DSTPN

Item	Notes and Decisions	Action
1.	<p>Welcome from the Chair.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No declarations of interest were received. NN noted that the feedback from the LSIP strategic communications group on the resilient workforce piece suggested organisations were able to manage individually rather than launching a shared campaign. Minutes of the previous meeting were agreed NN noted that there has been an interim meeting of the LSIP provider group. 	RD and EP agreed to meet re. data and insights
2.	<p>LSIP update – policy and funding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> NN provided context: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> This board acts as the steering group for the LSIP. It is clear that there will be another LSIP project for 3 years and the direction of travel is to align LSIPs with new strategic authorities. For Dorset this will be the proposed Wessex mayoral strategic authority (Dorset, BCP, Wiltshire, Somerset). FAQs have been shared about how LSIPs may work in devolved and non devolved areas. There is not yet clarity on funding. Last week 38 LSIPs met with Richard Pennycook – Interim Chair of Skills England (they are in process of appointing a Chair and should soon have a Board). Aim going forward is to connect all government departments into the skills landscape at local, regional and national levels. LSIPs will be codesigned with Local Authorities to align with strategic plans. A review of geographies is due to come out in the Spring. Employer Representative Bodies will be the voice for small business. Guidance will be published in the next few months. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RD asked if there is any indication of when other funding in the skills sector will be confirmed: No clarity yet but the next LSIP round will start in April. • AC noted they still haven't had information about LSIF funding. • NN detailed that the LSIP will have a new set of priorities by end of March and will publish their Annual Report in June (draft deadline is 23rd May). 	
3.	<p>Curriculum and employer feedback – Rosie Knapper – Slides attached</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rosie presented an update on the evidence base for employers skills needs (slides attached). • LSIP commissioned insights from Dorset LEP about the inclusive workplace. RD noted that women in Dorset are an interesting sector to look at – more highly qualified but working in lower skilled jobs or not working. 	
4. & 5.	<p>Economic Landscape, Devolution and Local Growth Plan & Dorset Skills Board – future work, hosting and civic responsibilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RD shared information about the paper that is being taken to the Dorset LEP board on Tuesday 28th January. • Outlined latest devolution position and the ambition to have mayoral elections in May 26. • Both councils are working on the requirement for a local growth plan. • Looking at the most recent economic outlook it is clear that Dorset is following national trends. • Confirmation that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dorset LEP's team delivering the Growth Hub contract will transition into Dorset Council's Growth & Economic Regeneration team. • Dorset Careers Hub team will transition into the Children's Services Team at Dorset Council. • The Digital Skills Hub contract will revert to BCP Council. • There is also a recommendation to the Board for the LEP to commission 3 pieces of research around skills to support the preparation for a strategic authority. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To understand the pan Dorset delivery for skills – what is currently delivered and associated funding streams. • To understand the impact and reach of a civic university model (AC gave more information about civic universities). • To provide officer support for the Dorset Skills Board. • RD and EP flagged the DSH / NHS Thrive in 2025 event being held at the Sovereign Centre, Boscombe on 30th January with opportunities in training, education, employment, and wellbeing. EP noted that it is not the intention for the NHS to own this going forward – they want to develop a model that can be taken on by any place to support the community. 	
6.	<p>Skills and Learning – Connected to work fund and plans</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SR outlined the 'Connect to Work' programme – a supported employment programme that is part of the Get Britain Working strategy (this White Paper was published in November). • Funding will come to Dorset Council to provide a programme across DC and BCP, with an agreement that Skills & Learning will lead. • Programme will include some direct delivery and some partnerships for delivery and referral. • Anticipation of funding for 5 years – dependant on reaching a peak number of economically inactive (900 people a year across the area) • Two strands: Getting people into work and providing support to people in work. • Currently doing a mapping exercise to produce a delivery plan in for first delivery around September. • Engaging employers to understand the support they need will be key. • EP noted the work they are doing, including in data & insights, and other programmes she's aware of to respond to the Get Britain Working paper. 	Slides attached

	<p>She sees widening participation and local jobs for local people as where she can add value. There is also funding associated with mental health and muscular skeletal challenges available. Sees it as important to connect to avoid duplication.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KT noted this is a different way of working. Previously DWP has been the delivery partner for this kind of delivery and support. Going forward they will be able to refer in. There is not currently a lot of information or guidance. • KT also noted that Keep Britain Working is the next version of Get Britain Working. Also flagged that different organisations see economic inactivity differently. • RD noted the importance of not cutting across Skills Bootcamps – which currently support people into work. And that there is currently a lot of 'asks' on employers. Also added some caution around the data (based on an ONS survey rather than DWP / HMRC data). • NN noted the current anxiety amongst employers around the growing cost of employment alongside the expectation of growth. 	
7.	<p>UKSPF 25/26 – Skills allocation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UKSPF will continue for another year (£1.4m for the area). BCP plan is due to be signed off on 28th January and Dorset's plan is going to cabinet on 11th February. Dorset's plan includes £200k for skills work – looking at an employer led scheme. • RD asked them to link up with Skills Boot Camps – as that is employer led. 	
8.	<p>People Festival</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This focused and fast moving event will be at the Vitality Stadium on 13th February. There is a full programme of key notes and seminars. 	
9.	<p>Individual Updates</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NN: Currently working on their work experience programme and have a number of events coming up. • AC: College had an OFSTED inspection just after Christmas and are happy with the result – and very proud of their team's response. Their building work is going ahead at pace. • KW: W&KMC are 6 months post merger and driving the harmonisation piece and redefining purpose and principles. First strategy day is on 4th February. • JG: Work and Health programme (for people with barriers to work) – has closed to new referrals. At the moment the reality is that there is a bit of a gap in provision. Restart is a very different programme. • EP: Would like to share more about their widening participation plan at the next meeting. The Coastal Navigators network pilot is working closely with their integrated neighbourhood teams in two priority areas. There is ongoing organisational change and workforce planning. • RD: Described her presentation to the ICP around the white paper and LMI data. The mixed group were very supportive. Not yet being an MCA has an impact but there is some funding (e.g. Connet to Work) for boards to respond to Get Britain Working. • DM: Thanked Rebecca for shepherding the Careers Hub team through the transition to Dorset Council. Focus at last steering group meeting was on those who are most disadvantaged and the Equallex work experience plans. Conscious that it's another ask on businesses. RD noted that the Careers Hub are working on helping businesses understand this ahead of time. • HJ: Having lost a major customer, has talked with local AEM and Defence companies – but in AEM work not trickling down to SMEs and defence supply chain piece makes it a difficult landscape. • IJ: Work is ongoing on BU's 2035 plan with Alison in post. Focus on engagement. Conscious of the stress businesses are under with 1st April coming. They are trying to be very inclusive in terms of who they are working 	Get presentation from RD to share – ICP

	<p>with – other VCs, MPs etc. Noted that if anyone is trying to partner with BU and not getting traction – contact him.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JB: Dorset council is delivering the tail end of the UKSPF programme – Green Skills course and Digital Skills courses. There is lots of activity about what devolution may look like. Local Growth Plan still in development. 	
9.	<p>AOB</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NN: Emphasised how key Dorset and BCP Councils will be going forward as we won't have Dorset LEP – we'll need something equally as strong to lead us forward. • EP: A very positive and important point. So many different partners are having similar conversations – how people come together across the skills piece is really important. • NN: Noted that the LSIP board needs a steering group / board – so if there is no other board, they will have to have a board for LSIP. • RD: Councils are supportive of the Dorset Skills Board going forward. 	

**Next Meetings:
Monday 24th March 14:00 – 16:00 on Teams**

DRAFT