

DRAFT MINUTES

DORSET LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP BOARD

25 MAY 2021 FROM 1.30 PM TO 4.00 PM

ZOOM MEETING

MINUTES

Board Attendees:

Andrew Wickham (AW)
Arabella Lewis-Smith (AL)
Diane Grannell (DG)
Cecilia Buffon (CB)
Emma Hunt (EH)
Ian Girling (IG)
Jim Andrews (JA)
Jim Stewart (JS) (Chair)
Cllr John Beesley (JB)
John Sutcliffe (JSu)
Luke Rake (LR)
Nick Brook (NB)
Nick Gaines (NG)
Nicola Newman (NN)
Paul Read (PR)
Sara Uzzell (SU)
Sophia Story (SS)
Cllr Tony Ferrari (TF)

Also Present:

Corrina Osborne (CO) (Dorset LEP)
Daniela Doncakova (DD) (Dorset LEP)
David Walsh (DW) (Dorset Council)
Elizabeth Spence (ES) (BEIS)
Kate Ryan (GF) (BCP Council)
Kathryn Hill (KH) (Dorset LEP)
Lorna Carver (LC) (Dorset LEP)

Apologies:

Aidan Dunn (AD) (Dorset Council)
Cllr Drew Mellor (DM)
Cllr Spencer Flower (SF)

Item	Notes and Decisions	Action
1.	<p>Apologies were received for: Cllr Drew Mellor, Cllr Spencer Flower and Aidan Dunn.</p> <p>Declarations of Interest: JS in relation to the Getting Building Fund item 5.3 DG for all items relating to B&P College LR for all items relating to Kingston Maurward College EH for all items relating to the Arts University Bournemouth JA for all items relating to Bournemouth University</p>	
2.	<p>The Minutes were agreed as an accurate reflection of the last meeting, with one correction, Samantha Richardson is the Director of the National Coastal Tourism Association. There were no matters arising.</p>	
3	<p>Director's Update</p> <p>CB started by mentioning that LC has handed in her notice and is leaving to take up a new role. She wished her all the best in her new role and informed the Board that this is LC's last meeting.</p> <p>CB explained that there had been an extra-ordinary meeting of the Nominations and Remuneration Committee to discuss what needs to happen in preparation for LC's departure. She informed the Board that the plan initially is to appoint an Interim and asked the Board to approve this action.</p> <p>Action: The Board approved the appointment of an interim Director</p> <p>JB expressed that the Board wished LC every success in her new role. He explained that he had joined Dorset LEP from the beginning and remembered LC joining. He thanked LC for all she has done and said that the success you have had speaks for itself and we thank you for all you have done.</p> <p>LC invited ES to speak about the LEP Review and she explained that all LEPs were involved in discussions with the LEP Network. She acknowledged the great work that Dorset LEP has done to date and encouraged to keep working with that. She mentioned the Levelling up funding was being led by local authorities and not LEPs, so that decision gave some sense of direction of travel. The Review is open and consultative and Government has not had any discussions yet. She thanked the Board for what they were doing and said to keep up the good work whilst waiting for review.</p> <p>LC updated the Board that Dorset LEP had passed its Annual Performance Review with flying colours. The next tranche of funding has been confirmed for the Getting Building Fund.</p> <p>CB mentioned she had attended a LEP Network meeting where there was lots of focus on net zero, carbon neutral, green finance institute and this gives us another point and another direction for our Energy Working Group.</p> <p>The Board noted the recommendation in the paper: To note that the Finance, Audit and Corporate Risk committee, will continue to support the Board to consider any possible implications arising from the LEP review.</p>	<p>All approved</p> <p>All noted</p>

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4	<p>Strategy Update</p> <p>IG started the item by explaining the results of the business economic survey written by the British Chamber of Commerce. He explained that from beginning of January to the end of March the economy was operating at two speeds. Cash flow was showing signs of improvements and professional services and marketing businesses were expecting turnover to increase. It said that businesses were feeling more optimistic. At a local level, some key issues were coming through and sectors that are open are starting to get busier. The industrial property market was picking up but the high street seems 'confused'. Recruitment is picking up and there were big increases in demand around hospitality. There are issues with recruitment around hospitality and construction though, with not enough people to fill the roles. Recovery was happening faster than anticipated but still need to see full effect once furlough has finished.</p> <p>JB mentioned that hospitality is facing a lot of problems and asked whether there is anything Dorset LEP should be doing in making representations to Government. He explained people have been returning to their home countries and the problems with language school students has caused a shortage of staff in the hospitality sector. If we get back to full capacity in hospitality it is going to be very difficult to staff that up. The impact has not yet been felt because hospitality is just opening up.</p> <p>IG mentioned that the British Chamber of Commerce would be a good route to do that.</p> <p>SU said that to attract businesses to Dorset there needs to be a strong economy all year round and that having a thriving visitor economy supports a regeneration and inward investment.</p> <p>JS said that a positive from Covid is staycations and that there has been an absolute surge in the leisure sector and the purchasing of boats has gone through the roof. Within the port sector there is a lot of uncertainty around cruises though. He informed that he had met with Sunseeker International and they had said that finding people to build their boats is an issue.</p> <p>DG said that changing policy of government is not going to happen overnight and so have a short term problem and suggested the idea of getting employment agencies in the area together to see if there is a way of helping.</p> <p>IG mentioned that some businesses are highlighting that getting lower skilled labour is also an issue.</p> <p>LC ran through her presentation on strategy and that the Board should be thinking about being ready for funding when it happens. There is some money available, if the Board is minded, to think about accelerating Dorset LEP to be in a position to be ready to go. She ran through the different strategy documents that are in place.</p> <p>Action: Strategy presentation to be circulated to the board.</p>	<p>KH</p>

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5.	Governance	
5.1	<p>Communications Update</p> <p>CK said she would take the paper as being read but highlighted that we are putting together a Dorset LEP promotional video and thanked those board members who have already been involved in that.</p> <p>JSu mentioned the public Defence and Cyber Security event that was taking place on Friday 28th, if anyone was available and could attend. This would be covered by FM during his item.</p> <p>CB thanked the Comms team.</p> <p>The Board noted the paper.</p>	
5.2	<p>Finance, Audit and Corporate Risk Committee (Confidential - Commercially Sensitive)</p> <p>CO said she would take the paper as being read and updated the Board on the discussions at the recent FACR Committee.</p> <p>The Board noted the recommendation in the paper</p>	
5.3	<p>Performance and Investment Committee (Confidential - Commercially Sensitive)</p> <p>DD said she would take her paper as being read but highlighted the recommendations in the paper.</p> <p>A discussion on the items in the paper took place.</p> <p>The Board approved the recommendations in the paper.</p>	
5.4	<p>Overview and Scrutiny Committee</p> <p>CO said she would take the paper as read. She highlighted that at the last meeting they covered managing conflicts of interest, SME engaging in business support offer, project lifecycle, project pipeline and support given to rural Dorset. The next meeting will cover best practice sharing with other LEPs, energy and digital connectivity activity and advertising Dorset LEP to businesses. The Committee noted Dorset LEP helps a breadth of businesses across Dorset and is proactive and willing to support activity to better the region.</p>	
6.	Strategy	
6.1	<p>Business Growth and Inward Investment Committee</p> <p>FM said he was taking the paper as read but he mentioned a couple of points to note and was happy to take questions.</p> <p>FM spoke about the Global Investment Summit and explained this was a closed call from DiT to partners and they are looking for up to 20 projects across the UK. FM explained the criteria is set out under item 2.5 in the paper. The intension is to look through the list of projects put forward under the Investment Prospectus. It is not a public call and there is a very tight turnaround.</p>	

Item	Notes and Decisions	Action
6.	Strategy Cont'd	
6.1	<p>Business Growth and Inward Investment Committee Cont'd</p> <p>Action: FM to follow up with the Board with the high level criteria and ask the Board if they know of any business to suggest to be put forward.</p> <p>FM informed that there have been 100 businesses register for the Defence and Security Event on Friday 28th from businesses within Dorset and also some from outside of Dorset.</p> <p>The Board noted the recommendations in the paper:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To promote the opportunity to participate in Peer Networks in 2021/22 • To promote the two programmes being offered by the Department for International Trade • To decide which projects, if any, from Dorset should be put forward as part of the Global Investment Summit in October 2021 	
6.2	<p>Skills Advisory Panel and Board</p> <p>EH said she wanted to compliment everyone who sits on the Skills Advisory Panel and Board for all the work that goes on. She said there is great collaborative and partnership working within the panel. She informed there is also a local skills investment plan coming up shortly.</p> <p>She explained that businesses have been offering virtual work placements.</p> <p>LR informed that, as a group of colleges, they have put in for the Development Fund pilot.</p> <p>IG mentioned the Trail Blazer and that there will only be between 6 and 8 Trail Blazers across the whole of the UK. He felt it was important for Dorset to raise its hand. He wanted to thank Rebecca Davies for her help and support with the bid and that it had been a really valuable piece of work.</p>	
6.3	<p>Strategic Infrastructure Committee: Energy Update</p> <p>CO informed the Board that a Low-Carbon Energy Investment Plan has been drafted. She explained there was a Stakeholder meeting on Wednesday to discuss it and map out immediate priorities. There was also an Energy Working Group meeting to discuss what going to do with that plan next.</p> <p>CO updated that Connected Dorset has been re-established as a sub-group of Strategic Infrastructure Committee.</p> <p>JS informed that Connected Dorset met last week and agreed a new Terms of Reference for the group. He said that Connected Dorset seems to be a well supported group and he will update the Board for the next meeting. He explained that he also attended the Western Gateway Sub National Transport Body.</p>	

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6.	Strategy Cont'd	
6.3	<p>Strategic Infrastructure Committee: Energy Update Cont'd</p> <p>CB mentioned communicating with MPs about sharing what the region is doing around rail.</p> <p>JS explained that Chris Loder MP was involved in a major project to try and link up the Weymouth/Dorchester line to Yeovil and London Salisbury line with north/south rail line. He said that this is discussed at the Western Gateway Sub National Transport Body and that the local authorities are part of that meeting and that he attends as the Chair of the Business and Transport Forum.</p> <p>The Board noted the recommendations in the paper:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is recommended the Board notes progress towards addressing the Dorset energy crisis including the forthcoming Dorset Low-Carbon Energy Investment Plan. • It is recommended the Board notes that Connected Dorset is now a sub-committee of the Strategic Infrastructure Committee, focused on promoting integrated, efficient and sustainable transport strategic priorities in the area. 	
6.4	<p>Enterprise Zone Committee</p> <p>CO mentioned there has been a meeting to discuss the Enterprise Zone Investment Plan. There has been lots of engagement and we have attended an MoD event on 20 May, a press conference on the Innovation Centre. The Battlelab is due to open in the Autumn and Dorset is set to be a real innovation centre.</p> <p>JSu explained that this is a flagship opportunity for Dorset for defence. A lot of collaboration going on. An enormous amount of collaboration between the local authority and the LEP to make this happen. Extremely positive and a lot of time and effort has been put in to make sure this stays on its current trajectory. It should deliver something quite good in next 2-5 years.</p> <p>TF mentioned Dorset Council's Levelling Up bid for a regeneration project in Portland to join up with the Innovation Centre to give water access.</p> <p>The Board noted the recommendations in the paper:</p> <p>It is recommended the Board commends the professional and enthusiastic contribution of Dorset Council, Dorset LEP and Ministry of Defence in the successful delivery of the Enterprise Zone Battle Lab.</p>	
7.	Papers for Information	
7.1	<p>Advisory Group Updates</p> <p>The Board noted the papers.</p> <p>LR informed the Board that the next Local Nature Partnership meeting was taking place in June.</p>	

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8.	Any Other Business	
	LC thanked the Board for their support during her time with Dorset LEP.	

Note: Date of Next Meeting - 22 July at 10.00 am

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