

**DORSET LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP BOARD**

**25 MARCH 2021 AT 10.00 AM**

**ZOOM MEETING**

**MINUTES**

**Board Attendees:**

Andrew Wickham (AW)  
Diane Grannell (DG)  
Cllr Drew Mellor (DM)  
Cecilia Bufton (CB) (Chair)  
Emma Hunt (EH)  
Jim Andrews (JA)  
Jim Stewart (JS)  
John Sutcliffe (JSu)  
Luke Rake (LR)  
Nick Gaines (NG)  
Sara Uzzell (SU)  
Sophia Story (SS)  
Cllr Spencer Flower (SF)  
Cllr Tony Ferrari (TF)

**Also Present:**

Aidan Dunn (AD) (Dorset Council)  
Corrina Osborne (CO) (Dorset LEP)  
Daniela Doncakova (DD) (Dorset LEP)  
David Walsh (Dorset Council)  
Elizabeth Spence (ES) (BEIS)  
Finn Morgan (FM) (Dorset LEP)  
Graham Farrant (GF) (BCP Council)  
Kathryn Hill (KH) (Dorset LEP)  
Lorna Carver (LC) (Dorset LEP)  
Cllr Philip Broadhead (BCP Council)  
Rebecca Davies (RD) (Dorset LEP)

**Apologies:**

Arabella Lewis-Smith (AL)  
Ian Girling (IG)  
Cllr John Beesley (JB)  
Nicola Newman (NN)  
Paul Read (PR)

**Presenting:**

Thomas Webb - Deputy Director UK Regions, Department for International Trade  
Rob Emony - Partnership Manager, Department for International Trade  
Samantha Richardson - Great South West Tourism Partnership  
Richard Smith - Dorset Tourism Association  
Jason Clark, DCA Public Relations

Item	Notes and Decisions	Action
1.	<p>Apologies were received for: Bella Lewis-Smith, Ian Girling, Cllr John Beesley, Nicola Newman and Paul Read.</p> <p>Declarations of Interest:            JS in relation to the Getting Building Fund item 5.3            DG for all items relating to B&amp;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> <p>CB mentioned that if any Board member had any items to add to the agenda or questions on the papers to get in touch with LC.</p>	
2.	<p>The Minutes were agreed as an accurate reflection of the last meeting. There were no matters arising.</p>	
3	<p><b>Director's Update</b></p> <p>LC gave explained that there is a correction to be made to the paper regarding the funding for Boscombe, this is actually £21.7m and not £27.1m.</p> <p>LC updated the Board that Dorset LEP has been doing a huge amount of work around business support and the business support function has continued to expand.</p> <p>LC informed the Board that the Annual Performance Review with BEIS went well and there are no anticipated changes to the indicative positive outcome when the formal notification is provided.</p>	
<b>4.</b>	<b>Guest Presentations</b>	
4.1	<p><b>Presentation from the Great South West Tourism Partnership</b></p> <p>Samantha Richardson (SR), Director of the National Coastal Tourism Association, and part of the the Great South West Tourism partnership, gave a presentation to the Board. Richard Smith also joined for this item.</p> <p>She explained that The Great South West Tourism Partnership, including Dorset LEP, have commissioned the National Coastal Tourism Academy to prepare a GSWTP Recovery plan and tourism zone pilot proposal to support the recovery of the sector post Covid-19 and ensure that recovery is aligned to the long-term ambitions of the partnership.</p> <p>SR provided an update on the work undertaken to date, the developing themes of the recovery plan and tourism zone proposal and the ask of government for support for the Great South West Tourism Partnership. She informed that 48% of tourism spend occurs in July and August. SR mentioned a proposed 'Evergreen Loan fund' where businesses apply for a loan through the fund and only pay back the loan when they meet certain performance measures. This has worked really well in Ireland.</p> <p>This question was asked why only £5m is being asked of government given Dorset's contribution to the economy from tourism. It was explained that the ask is to cover the next 18 months and some pilot projects to build the case for more significant investment. The £5m will help get the structure for the future asks.</p>	

Item	Notes and Decisions	Action
<b>4.</b>	<b>Guest Presentations Cont'd</b>	
4.1	<p><b>Presentation from the Great South West Tourism Partnership Cont'd</b></p> <p>JS asked whether marine leisure was mentioned in the plan, as Poole Harbour has seen a massive surge and this is happening all along the south coast. There has been a surge in small boat purchases and is a sector that is strong at the moment.</p> <p>SU explained that the historical challenge has been the fragmentation of the tourism sector. If there is a strong tourism sector that offers something all year round, we can attract other industries. Aiming big, connecting to create a broader strategy and linking everything up, can attract new businesses and staff.</p> <p>SR asked the Board to continue to support the evolving work of the Great South West Tourism Partnership and commit to discuss ways in which the LEP can support the Recovery Plan and asks of government once the report is finalised at end of March 2021.</p> <p><b>Action: KH to circulate a copy of SR's presentation to the Board.</b></p> <p><b>SR and RS left the meeting at 10.41</b></p>	KH
4.2	<p><b>Presentation from Department for International Trade</b></p> <p>Thomas Webb, introduced himself and explained he is the Deputy Director for Southern England for the Department for International Trade. He gave a presentation providing an overview of the Department's work in the region. He explained what the region does, the trade agreements and support available to regional businesses including the departmental programmes, the investment strategy, High Potential Investment Opportunities within Dorset and the work behind levelling up in the region.</p> <p>TW explained there are nine trade commissioners, who are at ambassadorial level, and cover the nine regions of the world. In the South West there is a team of professional trade advisors. They work with businesses to connect them with a central buyer, help them with overcoming issues with paperwork. The sector focussed teams work closely with the Department for Business to help ensure investment and trade happens in the best way possible. He mentioned the trade agreement and sector campaigns and ran through the different programmes.</p> <p>He ran through the process of the high potential investment opportunities. In Dorset, there is one confirmed and one in the pipeline. Aquaculture has seven active projects in the pipeline. These have been stalled slightly due to the current world event but hope that these will land over the next eighteen months or so. There is also a Marine Autonomy HPO in Dorset and along the whole of the south west.</p> <p>TW informed that he received additional funding in the budget for levelling up in the south west and that he has recruited more investment specialists who are actively working to increase trade and investment into the region.</p>	

Item	Notes and Decisions	Action
<b>4.</b>	<b>Guest Presentations Cont'd</b>	
4.2	<p><b>Presentation from Department for International Trade Cont'd</b></p> <p>EH asked about the investment opportunities strategy and the levelling up funding which seem to have a different set of sectors. TW explained that the two strategies are evolving and they need to look at re-aligning them. He mentioned that they hold round table events with LEPs where the Investment team and Policy team talk through their most recent thinking. They have a commitment to continue talking to the LEPs.</p> <p>TW said he was happy to come back and talk to the Board about their Export Strategy.</p> <p><b>Action: KH to circulate a copy of TW's presentation to the Board.</b></p> <p><b>TW and RE left the meeting at 11.20 am</b></p>	KH
4.3	<p><b>Strategy Update</b></p> <p>LC explained this item was about the ongoing work on strategy and the investment prospectus.</p> <p>Jason Clark (JC) introduced himself and explained that he was a communications consultant and journalist by training. He explained that he has been asked to look at the narrative that underpins the strategy for the future and to pick out some threads for that narrative, from a communications point of view, that Dorset can start pushing. He explained that the Investment Prospectus is a place based strategy for Dorset and not something that the Dorset LEP will deliver alone, but rather in partnership with others.</p> <p>He informed the Board that the Investment Prospectus will be formally launched on Monday 29<sup>th</sup> March and communications will be going out under embargo to local press outlets for next week.</p> <p>LC explained that an email will be sent out to the Board today regarding the launch and that we will be working with the Board, reporting back and ensuring activities remain joined up.</p> <p>JA mentioned that we should now think about where we are going, add another layer of work about what other things individual companies are doing to add into this, for example the re-development of the hospital, the Dorset Gateway building for BU, make the scale of investment happening even bigger and not just about government's money. This would enable adding to the narrative that has already started.</p> <p>CB mentioned that part of the next steps was looking at how we are going to resource this.</p> <p><b>The Board agreed the recommendations in the paper:</b></p> <p><b>It is recommended the Board approve working with partners to finalise the Balanced Business Score Card.</b></p>	All agreed

Item	Notes and Decisions	Action
<b>4.</b>	<b>Guest Presentations Cont'd</b>	
4.3	<b>Strategy Update Cont'd</b>  <b>It is recommended the Investment Prospectus Partnership Balanced Business Score Card is reported on under the strategy section of the Board paper pack.</b>  <b>TF left the meeting at 11.30 am</b> <b>JC left the meeting at 11.35 am</b>	
<b>5.</b>	<b>Governance</b>	
5.1	<b>Delivery Plan</b>  LC explained that under the National Local Growth Assurance Framework, Dorset LEP is required by government to produce an annual delivery plan and publish this online and we commit to doing so in our Local Assurance Framework.  The annual Delivery Plan is an operational document that covers the work of the executive function and the Board over one year and runs from April to March. Our Annual Report, published each spring and our Annual Performance Review and Mid-Term Reviews with government, examines our delivery against these objectives. Wider partnership activity both underway and planned, is articulated in the Investment Prospectus Implementation Plan and the Dorset Skills Action Plan.  The Dorset LEP 2021/22 Delivery Plan has been created and includes the areas of strategy, delivery and governance as these are the key areas of assessment by government in our Annual Performance Review. It is required that we submit the Delivery Plan to government and publish online by 9 April.  CB commented that staffing needs will have to change as the work changes.  <b>The Board agreed the recommendation in the paper:</b>  <b>It is recommended the Board endorse the 2021/22 Delivery Plan.</b>  <b>EH left the meeting at 11.45 am</b>	All agreed
5.2	<b>Communications Update</b>  CO introduced the paper which is to provide an update to the Board on Dorset LEP communications activity and forthcoming plans.	
5.3	<b>Board Finance Report (Confidential - Commercially Sensitive)</b>  LC pointed to the usual Board finance report and asked the Board to note it as we come up to the end of the current financial year.  <b>The Board agreed the recommendation in the paper and noted the 2020/21 financial position.</b>	All agreed
5.4	<b>Finance, Audit and Corporate Risk Committee (Confidential - Commercially Sensitive)</b>  LC outlined the proposed 2021/22 budget and explained that the draft budget and several modelling options was reviewed and recommended to the	

Item	Notes and Decisions	Action
<b>5.</b>	<b>Governance Cont'd</b>	
5.4	<p><b>Finance, Audit and Corporate Risk Committee (Confidential - Commercially Sensitive)</b></p> <p>Board by the Finance, Audit &amp; Corporate Risk Committee which meets quarterly and will continue to review the budget at these meetings.</p> <p><b>The Board agreed the recommendation in the paper and approved the 21/22 budget.</b></p>	All agreed
5.5	<p><b>Performance and Investment Committee (Confidential - Commercially Sensitive)</b></p> <p>DD asked the Board if they were happy to note the recommendations in the paper. The Board discussed the contents of the paper.</p> <p><b>The Board agreed the recommendations in the paper.</b></p>	All agreed
5.6	<p><b>Overview and Scrutiny Committee Cont'd</b></p> <p>CO informed the Board that the Overview &amp; Scrutiny Committee met in February and appointed a new Chair to fill the vacancy. Cllr Lawrence Williams has taken on this role. An overview of governance and assurance arrangements was presented, as was detail as to the impact of Covid-19 on Dorset LEP strategic direction, the risk management framework and project lifecycle.</p> <p>The Committee discussed the future work programme and for the next meeting it was agreed that presentations would be given on a range of topics including how SMEs are engaged in business support and how conflicts of interest are managed.</p>	
<b>6.</b>	<b>Strategy</b>	
6.1	<p><b>Strategic Infrastructure Committee</b></p> <p>CO updated the Board that the Strategic Infrastructure Committee met in February. There were a number of presentations given including transport, digital and green infrastructure across Dorset. A document summarising infrastructure ambition, relevant strategy documents and responsibilities for these areas was shared in the meeting and an update was presented on energy. There are still no groups looking into energy and Dorset LEP continues to engage in numerous discussions with SSEN, Regen and the South West Energy Hub to identify the most appropriate way forward. Dorset LEP will form an energy task and finish group linked to the Strategic Infrastructure Committee and commission evidence to support discussions.</p> <p>JSu suggested that following committee meetings the Committee Chair and the LEP team member responsible for the committee get together to have a look at what information is presented to the Board via updates.</p> <p>CB Commented that the key points from the meeting should be captured in the meeting in order to inform the Board papers rather than a separate meeting.</p>	

Item	Notes and Decisions	Action
<b>6.</b>	<b>Strategy Cont'd</b>	
6.2	<p><b>Business Growth and Inward Investment Committee</b></p> <p>FM said he wanted to signpost Board Members to the fact that funding is available and encouraged them to mention this when talking to businesses within their network.</p> <p>JSu mentioned that there was a Dorset Ambassadors event taking place on 28 April and asked that all LEP Board members were invited to it. FM confirmed that they have all been invited.</p> <p><b>The Board noted the recommendations in the paper:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>To note funding for Peer Networks in 2021/22 and promote the opportunity to participate in this programme</b></li> <li>• <b>To promote the funded specialist support being offered to businesses around EU/UK Transition</b></li> <li>• <b>To promote the two programmes being offered by the Department for International Trade</b></li> <li>• <b>To note the priority areas for FDI business support for 2021/22 and alignment of local and national approaches</b></li> </ul>	All agreed
6.3	<p><b>Skills Advisory Panel and Board</b></p> <p>RD wanted to highlight three things:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The Local Skills Report was going live on 31 March.</li> <li>2. The Mid Life MOT was being launched with communications happening next week. RD asked the Board to please share via their networks.</li> <li>3. If anyone was able to offer virtual work experience to year 10 students around May/June time please contact RD to let her know.</li> </ol> <p>JSu mentioned that there is a national movement about green jobs, all about Government signing up to zero carbon and where are jobs and skills associated with it. A national movement has started up around this targeted at young graduates. RD said there is already much activity around green jobs but would also look further into other government publications.</p>	
6.4	<p><b>Enterprise Zone Committee</b></p> <p>The Enterprise Zone Committee met in February and discussed the progress of the Enterprise Zone. A presentation was given on the business rate relief modelling work within the meeting and the Committee agreed to standing agenda items and reporting documentation.</p> <p>CO informed the group that following the meeting, Tony Ferrari had provided an outline of work that has been commissioned to explore options for the Enterprise Zone to drive its success.</p>	

Item	Notes and Decisions	Action
<b>7.</b>	<b>Papers for Information</b>	
7.1	<p><b>Advisory Group Updates</b></p> <p>The Board noted the papers.</p> <p>LR mentioned the Rural Enterprise Group acts as a conduit for other partners to see what the LEP is doing. They are looking at their five year plan, so if anyone has any comments on what they should do next, please contact LR.</p>	All
<b>8.</b>	<b>Any Other Business</b>	
	JSu wanted to highlight the enormous amount of work going on at the moment and to recognise how industrious the Dorset LEP team has been.	
	<p><b>Investment Prospectus</b></p> <p>LC mentioned the communications around this and that this will be sent to all of the Board and the local MPs. There is then a piece of work being prepared on business engagement and getting the industry voice in it.</p> <p>CB commented that there were a lot of businesses represented around the Board table and hopefully Board Members will be happy to use their voice. The more people telling this story the more helpful it is.</p>	

Note: Date of Next Meeting - 25 May at 1.30 pm