

**DORSET LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP BOARD MEETING**
**25 JANUARY 2022 AT 1.30 PM TO 4.00 PM**
**ZOOM MEETING**
**AGENDA**

Time	Page No	Item	Subject/Title	Presenter	Recommendations
1.30		1.	Apologies and declarations of interest	Cecilia Bufton	
		<b>2.</b>	<b>For Decision / Discussion</b>		
1.35	4	2.1	Interim Director's Update	Corrina Osborne	It is recommended the Board notes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The ongoing delay to the LEP review and the corporate risks associated with this.</li> <li>• The positive indicative outcome of the Annual Performance Review.</li> <li>• The continuing work around key sectors and infrastructure as outlined in the paper.</li> </ul>
2.15	8	2.2	One Health Nucleus Proposal	Luke Rake	It is recommended the Board supports the One Health Nucleus Project Proposal.
2.30		2.3	Nominations and Remuneration Committee	Jim Andrews	Paper to follow as meeting is scheduled for 19.01.22
		<b>3.</b>	<b>For Information / To Note</b>		
2.40		3.1	Chair's Update	Cecilia Bufton	Verbal Update
2.50	9	3.2	Finance, Audit and Corporate Risk Committee	Corrina Osborne	It is recommended the Board notes the Finance Report 2021/22.
2.55	10	3.3	Performance and Investment Committee	Nicola Newman	It is recommended the Board notes the Recommendations in the paper.
3.05	11	3.4	Business Growth and Inward Investment Committee	John Sutcliffe	It is recommended the Board:

					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Notes the Peer Networks programme update, including risks identified.</li> <li>• Notes the progress of an English Aquaculture Innovation Hub in Dorset.</li> <li>• Notes the launch of the Design Innovation Support.</li> <li>• Notes the start of work around the creation of a Farming Innovation Group.</li> <li>• Notes the update on the proposals for a South West Maritime Innovation Service.</li> </ul>
3.15	19	3.5	Skills Advisory Panel and Board	Luke Rake	The Board are asked to particularly note the work of the Dorset Gateway Skills Brokerage and the skills support offered to business, along with the Labour Market Information review of 2021 and the impact of continuing Covid-19 and EU-exit challenges.
3.25	23	3.6	Minutes of last meeting and matters arising	Cecilia Bufton	
3.30	31	3.7	Enterprise Zone	John Sutcliffe	None - for information
3.40	32	3.8	Advisory Group Updates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Dorset Tourism Association</li> <li>▪ Rural Enterprise Group</li> </ul>		None - for information
		<b>4.</b>	<b>Any Other Business</b>		
3.45					

**Note: Date of Next Meeting - 24 March 2022 at 10.00 am**

### LEP BOARD MEMBER KNOWN CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Board Member	Project Name
Diane Grannell, Bournemouth and Poole College	<b>Getting Building Fund</b> - Network Infrastructure
Drew Mellor, BCP Council	<b>Careers and Enterprise Company</b> - Enterprise Advisor Network
	<b>Careers and Enterprise Company</b> - Careers Hub
Ian Girling, Dorset Chamber Of Commerce and Industry	<b>Dorset Gateway</b> - Custom Brokerage Service
	<b>Dorset Gateway</b> - Peer Network
	<b>Dorset Gateway</b> - EU Transition - International Trade Support
Jim Stewart, Poole Harbour Commissioners	<b>Getting Building Fund</b> - Border Control Post
John Beesley, BCP Council	<b>Careers and Enterprise Company</b> - Enterprise Advisor Network
	<b>Careers and Enterprise Company</b> - Careers Hub
Luke Rake, Kingston Maurward College	<b>Getting Building Fund</b> - University Centre and Rural Business Hub
	<b>Growing Places Fund</b> - The Barn
Spencer Flower, Dorset Council	<b>Getting Building Fund</b> - Fibre Hub Connectivity in Rural Dorset
	<b>Growing Places Fund</b> - Ultrafast Broadband
	<b>Careers and Enterprise Company</b> - Enterprise Advisor Network
	<b>Careers and Enterprise Company</b> - Careers Hub
Tony Ferrari, Dorset Council	<b>Getting Building Fund</b> - Fibre Hub Connectivity in Rural Dorset
	<b>GPF – Growing Places Fund</b> - Ultrafast Broadband
	<b>Careers and Enterprise Company</b> - Enterprise Advisor Network
	<b>Careers and Enterprise Company</b> - Careers Hub

**DORSET LEP BOARD MEETING COVER SHEET**

<b>Meeting Date</b>	25.01.22	<b>Item Number</b>	2.1
<b>Security Level:</b>	<b>Confidential</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Commercially Sensitive</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Unclassified</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>Paper Title</b>	Interim Directors Update		
<b>Recommendation</b>	It is recommended the Board notes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The ongoing delay to the LEP review and the corporate risks associated with this.</li> <li>• The positive indicative outcome of the Annual Performance Review.</li> <li>• The continuing work around key sectors and infrastructure as outlined in the paper.</li> </ul>		
<b>Papers are provided for:</b>	<b>Decision</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Discussion</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Information</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**1. PURPOSE**

This paper provides the Board with key strategic information and updates. This includes an update on the LEP review, our Annual Performance Review submission and an update on the Business Case Pipeline.

**2. SUMMARY/BACKGROUND**
**LEP Review**

The Board has been updated as to the delay in the LEP Review outcome and the key risks for Dorset LEP at this time.

**Annual Performance Review**

We submitted the written paperwork required as part of the Annual Performance Review in January 2022 and have been informed by Government that based on this information, Dorset LEP meets the expectations on governance, strategic impact and funding delivery. This is a pass/fail exercise and this rating remains indicative, with the final outcome to be issued following our meeting with Government in early February. Key highlights from the submitted paperwork include:

<b>Delivery</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• £11.8m Getting Building Fund fully contractually committed, with three projects already completed and all projects delivering outcomes.</li> <li>• Local Growth Fund allocation of £98.4m was fully spent across 54 projects and £62m of match funding has been delivered.</li> <li>• Growing Places Fund: invested £14.3m in 12 projects; £7.8m has been recycled and re-invested to date.</li> <li>• Dorset Gateway: doubled annual funding and provided covid-response from information on financial support to employment and skills support.</li> <li>• Bid writing service: more than 1,000 hours of support provided and £1.2m funding generated.</li> <li>• Peer-to-Peer Network programme: more than 120 business supported. We received the joint third highest allocation of cohorts building on the success of last year and recognition for our best practice.</li> <li>• Sustainable Aquaculture HPO: most successful HPO from Round 1 and a Department of International Trade case study.</li> </ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Careers Hub: additional funding secured from Sept 2021 to deliver a Dorset-wide initiative with increased business input.</li> </ul>
<b>Strategy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dorset Investment Prospectus: articulates the vision and ambition for Dorset. This investment portfolio that enables investors to easily discover the unique opportunities Dorset has to offer and translates the ambitions and interventions set out across into a coherent programme for investment and delivery in the next 2-10 years.</li> <li>Dorset Low Carbon Investment Opportunities document: showcases opportunities for inward investment, highlighting some of the unique opportunities Dorset geography and infrastructure provides.</li> <li>Dorset Skills Action Plan: embodies the strategic alignment of skills and enterprise activity for our region.</li> <li>Growing Places Fund and future funding pipeline submissions were all assessed in consideration of strategic documents.</li> </ul>
<b>Governance</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The decision making on our Board is one third female, 79% private sector and half of our private sector members are from SMEs.</li> <li>We have a robust governance structure that offers reassurance, transparency and scrutiny.</li> <li>Committees embed the Nolan Principles and our webpages detail members, meeting papers and minutes.</li> <li>Annually reviewed policies are available on our webpages.</li> <li>Internal standard operating procedures ensure consistency and resilience</li> <li>Work closely with our Accountable Body. The S151 officer attends Board meetings and key committees.</li> </ul>

### **British Business Bank (BBB) Engagement**

We have met with the BBB regarding the BBB South West Regional Fund. BBB will continue to work with LEPs to develop the fund and regional allocations and how the fund will operate.

We participated in a roundtable discussion on the Regions & Nations Tracker Report from the BBB that explores the geographical patterns seen in UK smaller business finance. This was the first annual tracker and is designed to complement the BBB flagship Small Business Finance Markets report with additional analysis of the region and devolved nation dynamics.

The discussion centred on the key topics of the report, namely regional disparities, investor networks and rurality. The sessions form part of a wider conversation on key issues across the UK.

### **Business Case Pipeline Update**

The first draft full business cases were completed in December and it is envisioned the final business cases will be completed by the end of February. Support will then be given for identifying appropriate funding sources should Dorset LEP not receive additional capital funding.

### **Sectors Highlights**

**Agritech:** The South West Agritech Positioning Paper, created collaboratively by all six LEPs in the South West region (and available [here](#)) but contracted within Dorset, has been circulated to the South West Agritech Networking Group which includes universities, government agencies (such as CEFAS), industry and the Department for International Trade. On the strength of the positioning paper, the latter are now promoting Agritech across the region into a Special Project, which is similar to a High Potential Opportunity, in order to stimulate investment into the region.

**Rural:** We are supporting research which will provide insight into support measures for farmers in the region who are facing changes in financial support and the potential for significant wider economic impacts from farmers deciding to reduce/abandon agriculture. We also participated in the All-Party Parliamentary Group for the Great South West which had a focus on Rural Productivity in the Great South West region at which Board Member Luke Rake gave a key presentation.

As reported previously, the Government has announced £120m Farming Innovation Programme and a £27m Farming Investment to support farming innovation and adoption of sustainable technology. We are establishing a Farming Innovation Group to help shape a Dorset strategy to optimise access to this funding. This strategy will also be used to inform the support we can provide via our bid writing support service to assist farmers in applying into competitive rounds in 2022. Through supporting Dorset applications to this fund, we anticipate transforming agriculture and agricultural productivity and making new connections between farmers and businesses and academic innovation agencies for knowledge exchange activity.

### **Infrastructure Highlights**

**Energy:** Our work as a Board representative on the South West Energy Hub continues. We have also secured a dedicated Programme Manager position within the South West Energy Hub. This role - which is currently being recruited to - will lead the identification, co-ordination and development of energy projects in Dorset, acting as the first point of contact for local authorities and other stakeholders. The successful candidate will assist in project appraisal and development in the energy sector and offer support throughout the process, including options assessment, feasibility, building the business case, initial design and planning, to securing investment.

We have met with Western Power Distribution to articulate the South West's net zero ambitions and to understand the WPD business plan including demand and supply forecasts and investment plan, grid connection policy and local constraints and future partnership working to achieve net zero ambitions. We are participating in the Scottish & Southern Energy Networks Capacity sessions in February.

**Transport:** We continue to participate in the Association of Directors of Environment, Economy, Planning & Transport (ADEPT) South West Sub National Board. Through this we have worked on the policy challenge paper on the Transport Decarbonisation Plan which has been shared with the Department for Transport and with the National Audit Office on their report around local government and net zero which has been recently published.

### **Communications Update**

Since the last Board meeting our highest-performing media coverage features included the Labour Market Intelligence report and the Defence BattleLab project page. Engagement activity this period, was largely focused on raising the social media profile of Dorset Careers Hub in preparation for the launch of a new dedicated Dorset Careers Hub website.

The media picked up a range of stories related to skills spanning from the opening of the Innovation Studio at AUB, to outputs from Dorset Careers Hub and the Enterprise Advisor Network, to the opening of the outdoor classroom at Hengistbury Head. The development and release of a thought leadership article helped promote the LEP's overarching work in addressing skills challenges and identifying opportunities for attracting and retaining skills; this attracted a high level of impressions and engagement on LinkedIn.

Dorset Gateway continued to attract a steady flow of visitors, which actually increased over 33% from the previous period, and sector wise, our collaborative efforts in Sustainable Aquaculture were featured in trade press outlet, Fish Farmer magazine.

### **3. RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended the Board notes:

- The ongoing delay to the LEP review and the corporate risks associated with this.
- The positive indicative outcome of the Annual Performance Review.  
The continuing work around key sectors and infrastructure as outlined in the paper.

**DORSET LEP BOARD MEETING COVER SHEET**

<b>Meeting Date</b>	25.01.22	<b>Item Number</b>	2.2
<b>Security Level:</b>	<b>Confidential</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>Commercially Sensitive</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>Unclassified</b> <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Paper Title</b>	One Health Nucleus Proposal		
<b>Recommendation</b>	It is recommended the Board supports the One Health Nucleus Project Proposal.		
<b>Papers are provided for:</b>	<b>Decision</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>Discussion</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>Information</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**1. PURPOSE**

Following from three One Health Showcase events and a multi-agency One Health Sandpit event in 2021, Dorset LEP will be submitting a proposal for funding to develop a One Health Nucleus.

**2. SUMMARY/BACKGROUND**

The One Health Nucleus is a One Health focused Knowledge Exchange entity which will support potential high-growth companies to establish clean growth commercial solutions to global One Health problems.

**3. RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended the Board supports the One Health Nucleus Project Proposal.



**DORSET LEP BOARD MEETING COVER SHEET**

<b>Meeting Date</b>	25.01.22	<b>Item Number</b>	3.2
<b>Security Level:</b>	<b>Confidential</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>Commercially Sensitive</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Unclassified</b> <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Paper Title</b>	Finance, Audit & Corporate Risk Committee Update		
<b>Recommendation</b>	It is recommended the Board notes the Finance Report 2021/22.		
<b>Papers are provided for:</b>	<b>Decision</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>Discussion</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Information</b> <input type="checkbox"/>

**1. PURPOSE**

The purpose of this paper is to provide information on discussions on finance, audit and corporate risk discussed by the Committee and recommendations from this for the Board.

As discussed in the January meeting, May Palmer was appointed as Chair of the Committee.

**2. SUMMARY/BACKGROUND**
**2.1 FINANCE**

The Committee reviewed the 2021/22 Finance Report and recommended the Board notes the paper.

**2.2 CORPORATE RISK**

A key risk is the ongoing national LEP Review, the outcome of which is still unknown.

The Committee agreed that rather than await the outcome of the LEP Review, it is essential to establish a single voice for Dorset across key stakeholders, to establish exactly what it is Dorset wants and to then negotiate with Government regarding how to deliver this.

The Committee also reviewed the corporate risk register.

**3. RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended the Board notes the Finance Report 2021/22.

The papers for agenda Item 3.3 are not included as they are Commercially Sensitive

**DORSET LEP BOARD MEETING COVER SHEET**

<b>Meeting Date</b>	25.01.22	<b>Item Number</b>	3.4
<b>Security Level:</b>	<b>Confidential</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Commercially Sensitive</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>Unclassified</b> <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Paper Title</b>	Dorset LEP Business Growth and Inward Investment update		
<b>Recommendation</b>	It is recommended the Board: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Notes the Peer Networks programme update, including risks identified.</li> <li>• Notes the progress of an English Aquaculture Innovation Hub in Dorset.</li> <li>• Notes the launch of the Design Innovation Support.</li> <li>• Notes the start of work around the creation of a Farming Innovation Group.</li> <li>• Notes the update on the proposals for a South West Maritime Innovation Service.</li> </ul>		
<b>Papers are provided for:</b>	<b>Decision</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Discussion</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Information</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

**1. PURPOSE**

To brief the Board on delivery, activities and developments relating to business growth and inward investment activity within Dorset LEP and current activity within the key sectors across Dorset.

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. This paper aligns with Dorset LEP's governance structure and will reflect those areas that are overseen by the Business Growth and Inward Investment (BG&I) Committee.

Inward investment is achieved through the delivery of the Memorandum of Understanding for foreign direct investment in partnership with the Department for International Trade (Investment Services Team).

**2. SUMMARY/BACKGROUND**
**2.1 Business Growth and Inward Investment Committee update**

The BG&I Committee met in December 2021 with main areas of discussion being around the longer-term strategic purpose of the group. This discussion, led by the Chair and supported by input from senior economic development representatives from both local authorities, concluded that small working group would meet to draft revised terms of reference for the group that reflected the future strategic needs of the county regarding ongoing business support.

The Committee received an update from the South West Partnership Manager from the Department for International Trade's (DIT) South West Partnership Manager in relation to the launch of the new Global Investment Atlas and the two High Potential

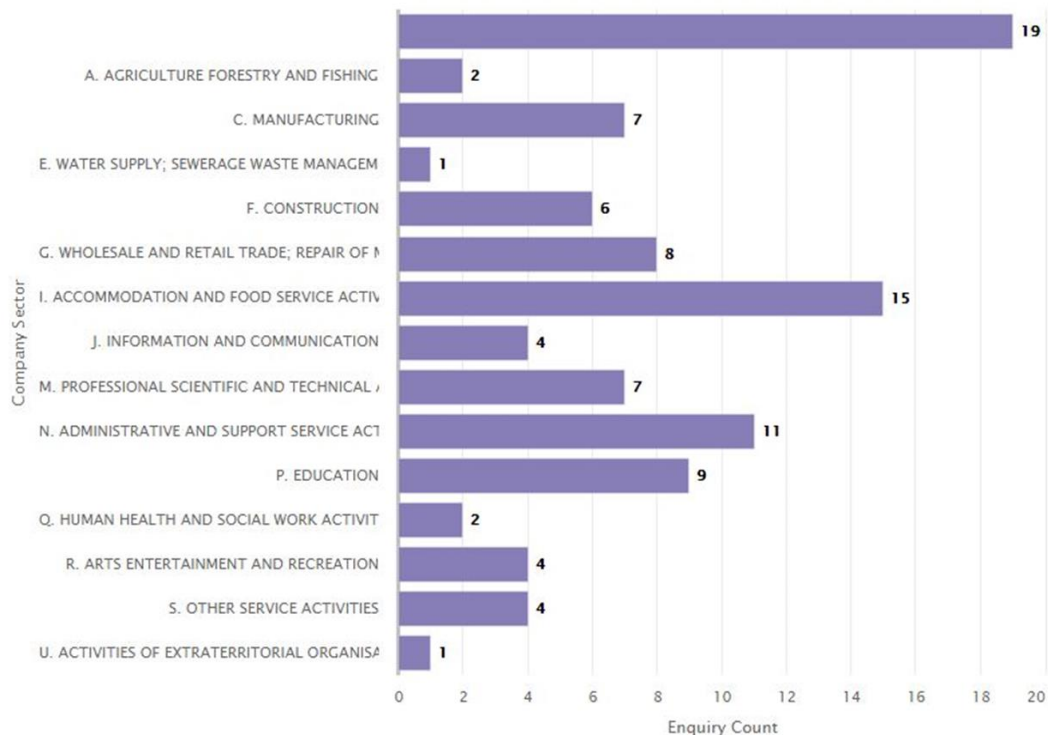
Opportunity (HPO) propositions that Dorset is the focus – or part – of. Both are covered in more detail in section 2.5 below.

## 2.2 Helping Dorset businesses to increase their resilience against the impact of economic shocks

### Back to Business: BCP Futures Campaign

This programme, funded by BCP Council as part of their BCP Futures Campaign, is aimed at helping businesses in the BCP area recover stronger from the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. This project officially started at the beginning of September and will conclude by 31 March 2022. With the aim of engaging 100 businesses by 31 March, as of 11 January we have achieved that target. 34 businesses have completed a business diagnostic and have been signposted to other support, such as Peer Networks, as well as programmes offered by others such as Dorset Growth Hub.

A breakdown of businesses accessing the programme by sector is provided below. The first bar is where the applicant has not disclosed their sector in their initial expression of interest form.



More information can be found at: <https://www.dorsetlep.co.uk/back-to-business>

### Peer Networks Programme

In April 2021, we were awarded funding to deliver 20 cohorts, supporting up to 220 businesses in the process. As of 17 January 2022, 132 participants were actively engaged in the programme. Seven cohorts were live and two were completed. It was expected that all remaining cohorts would be in progress by the end of January, but this is now looking increasingly unlikely. Our monthly meetings with partners and other contract management arrangements have meant that we have been monitoring and managing the situation. However, it became apparent towards the end of December that all three delivery partners would not be able to fulfil their contracted quota of cohorts, largely due to challenges recruiting businesses.

Where necessary, we have amended contracts with our delivery partners. To mitigate any further risk of non-delivery, two cohorts will now be delivered in-house by Dorset LEP and we are discussing options for re-allocating any remaining cohorts. Accordingly, a revised target of between 17 and 18 cohorts - against our target of 20 - has been set which will surpass our achievements in 2020/21.

We have remained in contact with BEIS regarding the projected delivery numbers and they have advised that no formal amendment to our grant offer letter is required as all amounts are claimed in arrears and upon completion. There is therefore no financial risk to Dorset LEP.

We were advised in late December by BEIS that the funded Peer Networks programme will not be continuing in 2022/23. As such, the programme is being decommissioned nationally and we have notified existing delivery partners that this is the case. All current contracts end on 31 March 2022 so there is no commitment beyond that date.

This programme is being reported as an Amber Risk on Dorset LEP's project dashboard and reported to the Performance and Investment Committee as such.

To find out about the programme, visit: [www.dorsetlep.co.uk/peernetworks](http://www.dorsetlep.co.uk/peernetworks)

### **Help to Grow Programme: Management and Digital**

The government has launched two new flag-ship business support programmes aimed at increasing business productivity amongst SMEs in the UK.

#### **a. Help to Grow: Management**

Help to Grow: Management (HtGM) supports senior managers of small and medium sized businesses to boost their business's performance, resilience, and long-term growth. It is a 12-week programme is designed to be taken alongside full-time work through a combination of online sessions and face-to-face learning. The cost to attend is also 90% funded by the Government with businesses contributing £750.

The eligibility criteria is very similar to that of the Peer Networks programme:

- Small or Medium-sized Enterprise (SME) based in the United Kingdom;
- From any business sector, employing between 5 and 249 people;
- Have been operational for at least one year - Not a charity.

Delivered by leading UK business schools, including Bournemouth University's (BU) Business School, and accredited to the Small Business Charter, HtGM includes 50 hours of in-depth training, 1:1 business mentoring, and the opportunity to grow business.

Whilst we have no formal delivery requirements regarding this programme, we have been asked by colleagues in the central Growth Hub Team in BEIS to work with local providers to help promote it and sign-post businesses. Accordingly, a member of the Dorset Gateway team has been working closely with the BU Business School programme lead for HtGM to promote this opportunity amongst Dorset SMEs. We have dedicated a page on our website to the programme and written to all last year's Peer Networks participants (other than charities) to highlight this opportunity.

Our support has enabled BU to launch its first cohort and we have received positive feedback from their programme lead which has been shared with colleagues at BEIS: *"The LEP have been vital and important partners in helping us get the cohort up and running. This has been in a variety of ways; from explaining the environment for businesses in the area, from undertaking promotion of the programme at every opportunity, to directly marketing to named businesses which has resulted in several*

confirmed sign ups. We look forward to working closely together moving forward with future cohorts."

You can find out more by visiting: <https://www.dorsetlep.co.uk/help-to-grow-management>.

- b. **Help to Grow: Digital (HtGD)**- the government was due to launch the second part of the Help to Grow Programme in December but there has been a further delay. As part of this programme, businesses will be able to get free, impartial online support on how technology can boost their performance through a new online platform. Eligible businesses will also be able to get a discount of up to 50% on the costs of approved digital software, up to a maximum of £5,000.

Through the scheme, vouchers are expected to be available for software that helps businesses build customer relationships and increase sales, make the most of selling online and manage their accounts and finances digitally. These vouchers will be available to UK businesses that:

- have between 5 and 249 employees;
- are registered at Companies House or are a registered society listed on the Financial Conduct Authority's Mutuals Register;
- have been trading for more than 12 months; and
- are purchasing the approved software for the first time.

Businesses can register their interest in the scheme, at: <https://register-help-to-grow-scheme.service.gov.uk/>.

### 2.3 Focusing resources on our existing strengths and high-growth sectors

#### **South West Maritime Innovation Service proposal**

Following an initial meeting involving representatives from industry, research and local government bodies – including three South West LEPs BCP Council and Dorset Council – in November 2021, a draft business plan paper has been developed as part of the wider Ocean Futures programme.

As part of the Oceans Future programme, there is a proposal to establish a new South West wide Innovation Delivery Service for marine, maritime and offshore developments. Outputs from this will directly address government priorities as detailed in the 2021 Innovation Strategy and will specifically deliver new technology for the Road to Net Zero in Maritime 2050, the UK's commitment to Offshore Renewables and the UK Aquaculture Strategy.

Ocean Futures will deliver a core element of the wider innovation strategy of the existing Maritime UK SW cluster, which is supported by the three regional Local Enterprise Partnerships and the research and business community as well as being affiliated with the national cluster, Maritime UK.

This proposal is still being developed as is intended to create a framework for investment rather than being a rigid delivery mechanism. As such, it is still subject for change based on feedback of stakeholders and developments across government with regards to future economic development activity.

#### **English Aquaculture Innovation Hub**

The Dorset Coast Forum (DCF) has been engaging with stakeholders, marine users and landowners across England regarding a proposal for a new specialist hub in England

to help understand a range of views and needs and to facilitate a mutually beneficial relationship between existing use and new aquaculture business.

In support of this, the [results](#) of an online survey, which closed in November, highlighted that 90% of the responses supported an English Aquaculture Innovation Hub and 83% of the responses said that the concept of an English Aquaculture Innovation Hub is relevant to them or their business/organisation. The survey went out to 650 people across England with more than 250 unique visits to our website were recorded as a result, and we received a total of 81 completed responses, 31 of which were from businesses. Of these, 71% were from aquaculture businesses

The survey was closely followed by two online workshops held at the beginning of December, that discussed what form an Aquaculture Innovation Hub could take and how it can meet the needs of the sector.

For the new year, the Dorset Aquaculture Development Officer, who is jointly funded by Dorset Council and DCF, is offering one-to-one conversations with stakeholders who want to focus on other areas or functions that an Innovation Hub might be able to provide. As part of this work, researchers from NEF Consulting, part of the New Economics Foundation (NEF), are seeking information from businesses to assess the economic state of the aquaculture sector in England. The information collected will be vital to understanding the economy of the English aquaculture sector. DCF is leading on stakeholder engagement to ensure the outcomes of the studies meet the needs of the local, regional and national maritime sectors, and 5G Rural Dorset has come on board to look at how 5G technology could enhance the sector as it grows. This might be through making remote monitoring of farms possible, for example.

### **South West AgriTech**

It was reported at the last meeting that a [South West Agritech Positioning Paper](#), which makes a case for the region's position as the UK's growing powerhouse in AgriTech, had been published. This work was brought to the attention of colleagues in DIT's Investment Services Team (IST) and has been very well received by the Head of Investment, Southern England Region. As a result DIT has agreed to generate a target list of up to 100 companies in the same way that they do with the High Potential Opportunities (HPO). An initial meeting was held on 08 December to pull together a Project Inception Document (PID) and to agree on what an ideal business might look like. DIT will now develop a longlist (between 100-125) of international companies that have the right characteristics to invest in the South West Agritech Sector. These businesses will be broken down by market and a justification for each as to why it has been included. The longlist will hopefully be completed by the end of January 2022 and further updates will be provided to the Board as they become available.

In addition to this work, Mike Freer MP, Minister for Exports, formally launched a new portal to help the UK Agri-Tech industry export to new markets on 10 January. Working with the Department for International Trade, the three leading UK Agri-Tech Trade Associations have joined forces to launch an [Agri-Tech-UK Directory](#) to provide an invaluable, high-functionality resource and point of contact for overseas producers and companies in the agricultural industry, as well as enabling overseas embassies and government trade departments to locate UK companies and their specialist services.

UK Technology for Agriculture and Genetics (UK TAG), the Commercial Horticultural Association (CHA) and the Agricultural Engineers Association (AEA) are working together to promote the skills, innovation and technology capabilities of their members. In addition, they have developed the portal in partnership with the four Agri-Tech Innovation Centres (Agrimetrics, Agri-Epi, Crop Health and Protection (CHAP) and Centre for Innovation and Excellence in Livestock (CIEL) and Local Enterprise Partners in the Midlands Engine, Northern Powerhouse and South West.

## 2.4 Ensuring innovation is a key foundation of productivity in Dorset

### Farming Innovation Group project

Dorset LEP's Bid Writing Support Specialist has been commissioned to carry out a piece of work around the creation of a Farming Innovation Group. Prior research identified that there was the need for an industry-led (farmer/farm innovator) project to increase the number of Dorset farmers and food innovators (also including food processing companies) winning grant funding, as well as the need for the development of a farming innovation network to better inform county farmers of the support available to them as Dorset businesses. The work recognised that farmers are often a hard-to-reach business group for the business and innovation support world.

The project proposes that a Farming Innovation Group (FIG), led by farmers, might well be the best mechanism to increase grant wins and to better inform and support the farming community. This will include looking at how these businesses access services such as Dorset Gateway and other business support programmes, to drive-up farming productivity, increase business resilience and to work towards a more sustainable farming model improving biodiversity and reducing carbon-footprint.

### Key project drivers:

- FIG aligns with the UK Government's Build Back Better agenda, UK Innovation Strategy, Net Zero Carbon ambition (by 2050), and the Environment Act 2021; as well as the One Health programme within the Dorset Local Industrial Strategy. A direct driver regarding grants are
  - Those farmers interested in the Farming Investment Fund - a) b) [Farming Transformation Fund](#),
  - [Farming Innovation Programme 2022 rounds](#): a) [Large R&D Partnership Projects](#) b) [Working on Longer Term solutions Farming Innovation Projects](#)
- Kingston Maurward estate and Bagber Farms have indicated their interest – as commercial farmers – to set-up an innovation and business network for farmers and AgriTech innovators (which can include food processing). This aligns with the investment made by Dorset LEP in the Kingston Maurward College (KMC) University Centre and Business Hub, which are designed to bring rural business together with business support as well as support from the world of research.
- One Health Programme – One Health 2022 conference will have Agricultural Innovation as its theme. This will include how the farming community can better connect with wider business and innovation support agencies to design, develop and commercialise solutions to One Health global problems, such as assuring food security and food supply in a changing climate. It will also look at innovations in agri-pharmaceuticals - how food innovation can help fight disease.

This project started in December and will conclude by 31 March 2021.

### Design Innovation Support

Dorset Gateway has partnered with Arts University Bournemouth (AUB) to offer a new, exclusive, consultant and specialist-led innovation and design funding for emerging Dorset businesses. Funded consultancy of up to £5,000 is being made available to sole traders, limited companies and social enterprises registered or operating within Dorset, through this funding. The support provides up to 100 hours of design consultancy from one of three highly regarded Dorset product design and development specialists. The support funded will vary dependent on individual business requirements.



A call for applications was opened in December and closed on 06 January 2022. A total of 18 applications were received and assessed against set criteria which looked at technology readiness levels, routes to market, social impact and carbon reduction. As a result, six applications has been provisionally identified for further funded support of between £1,500 and £5,000. Interviews will be held with these candidates in the coming weeks to make a final decision on whether these projects receive funded support.

Applicants whose proposals were not taken forward have been contacted and, where possible and/or appropriate, signposted to other business support programmes more suited to their projects.

## **2.5 Promoting Dorset as a key inward investment area for innovative, ambitious and fast-growing businesses**

### **Investment Atlas**

On 19 October 2021, ahead of the COP26 conference, the UK government hosted the Global Investment Summit (GIS) which focused on galvanising foreign investment in the UK's green industries of the future. As part of this campaign of activity, DIT brought together a portfolio of strategically important and innovative sustainable investment opportunities from across the UK to highlight to investors. This virtual catalogue of investable opportunities is known as the Investment Atlas.

The first iteration of the Investment Atlas focused on clean investment in the UK and included the Sustainable Aquaculture and Marine Autonomy High Potential Opportunities (HPOs) - both of which focus or feature Dorset.

- [Marine autonomy in the South West - great.gov.uk international](https://www.great.gov.uk/international/marine-autonomy-in-the-south-west)
- [Sustainable aquaculture in Dorset - great.gov.uk international](https://www.great.gov.uk/international/sustainable-aquaculture-in-dorset)

Following the conclusion of COP26 in November 2021, the Atlas was expanded to cover all sectors and opportunities actively promoted by DIT (including all HPOs). More information is here: <https://www.great.gov.uk/international/investment/>

### **High Potential Opportunity (HPO) scheme**

Work has continued on the promotion of both the Sustainable Aquaculture HPO and the multi-LEP Marine Autonomy HPO with activities focused on lead generation taking place in the last three months.

Sustainable Aquaculture HPO: In September the DIT's IST Knowledge Lab was commissioned to undertake Market Research for Target Generation to support the Dorset Aquaculture HPO. Their aim was to develop a longlist (100-125) of international companies that have the right characteristics to invest in the Aquaculture sector.

Companies in the list have been identified from a range of Aquaculture associations, industry-adjacent associations and relevant industry events, alongside more general internet searches using keyword combinations and existing databases and profiles. Further details are provided below. A similar process is being undertaken for the Marine Autonomy HPO.

## **2.6 Helping Dorset's businesses to access opportunities for growth through exporting goods and services overseas**

### **Department for International Trade's (DIT) Export Growth Programme**

Members of the Dorset Gateway team have been working alongside the Department for International Trade (DIT) to connect local businesses with Export Academy and SME Internationalisation Fund.

To date, 33 Dorset SME's have applied for funding via the SME Internationalisation Fund, which offers match-funded grants of between £1,000 and £9,000 to help support future export activity. 32 of these have received funding offers totalling just over £230,000. Our target is to help up to 95 Dorset SME's successfully apply for this fund between now and the end of December 2022.

Just over 50% of the funds are still available for Dorset SMEs. With nearly half of the funding allocated for Dorset, we are on track to achieve to fulfil our funding allocation.

The Dorset Gateway team will continue to promote this programme and look at some targeted activity with key sectors, such as manufacturing and engineering where has been a good level of interest already, as well as underrepresented sectors such as food and drink to try and increase interest in the programme. To find out more, visit: <https://www.dorsetlep.co.uk/business-support-international-trade#InternationalisationFund>

### **3. RECOMMENDATION**

- To note the Peer Networks programme update, including risks identified.
- To note the progress of an English Aquaculture Innovation Hub in Dorset.
- To note the launch of the Design Innovation Support.
- To note the start of work around the creation of a Farming Innovation Group.
- To note the update on the proposals for a South West Maritime Innovation Service.

## DORSET LEP SKILLS ADVISORY PANEL AND BOARD MEETING COVER SHEET

<b>Meeting Date</b>	25 January 2022	<b>Item Number</b>	3.5
<b>Security Level:</b>	<b>Confidential</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Commercially Sensitive</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Unclassified</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>Paper Title</b>	Dorset LEP Skills Advisory Panel and Board Update		
<b>Recommendation</b>	The Board are asked to particularly note the work of the Dorset Gateway Skills Brokerage and the skills support offered to business, along with the Labour Market Information review of 2021 and the impact of continuing Covid-19 and EU-exit challenges.		
<b>Papers are provided for:</b>	<b>Decision</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Discussion</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Information</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

### 1. PURPOSE

This paper provides an update from the Dorset Skills Advisory Panel and Board (SAPB), together with operational updates from Dorset LEP skills team in Dorset between Nov 2021 and Jan 2022.

### 2. SUMMARY

#### Skills team operational update

Dorset LEP have been working to ensure Dorset residents have opportunities to participate in recovery initiatives, as they become available.

- **Skills Advisory Panel Programme** – as anticipated, the Department for Education (DfE) guidelines for review of our Local Skills Report have been shared and we will work with the SAPB to review and update the Dorset plan by the deadline of 31 January 2022. Future plans to be confirmed by DfE are likely to include a Local Skills Improvement Plan aligned to a strategic development fund (subject to budget availability).
- **Skills Boot Camps** – in addition to the current [Skills Bootcamp](#) roll out, we are involved in potential bids for wave 3 provision. Within the next wave, there is a clear focus on green skills bootcamps and skills bootcamps as a lead into apprenticeships. Eligible candidates should be over 19 years old, either be in work or unemployed for less than 12 months and be local residents.
- **Restart Programme** – Seetec who are delivering the Restart programme for long term unemployed (1yr+ )in the South West. Numbers of self-referrals are reported to be 'positive', however there are currently no statistics available to confirm numbers receiving training, personal guidance and direction to employment. Restart providers and Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) are hoping to find a solution to share data. Seetec plus are also working to understand solutions in rural and coastal areas, bringing together key representatives to inform solutions.
- **Skills Commission** – Bournemouth Christchurch and Poole (BCP) and Dorset Councils have approved funding for a year long Skills Commission to review the Dorset skills landscape in consideration of the Skills White paper, the levelling up agenda and produce a report that lays out a potential skills journey with 10, 20 and 30 years trajectories. This work is commencing at pace with the LEP providing the secretariate function.

## Dorset LEP Skills Brokerage via Dorset Gateway

The [Business Productivity Review](#) published in November 2019 by HM Government identified that whilst the UK has some of the most productive businesses in the world, there was a longstanding productivity gap with our international competitors. Boosting productivity of the UK's 5.9 million SME to match that of Germany could add up to £100 billion to our economy and improve the competitiveness of UK Business. The actions included Peer Networks and Small Business Leadership Programmes, both of which Dorset Gateway has been supporting and helping to implement in the Dorset region.

The 23<sup>rd</sup> November saw Bournemouth University Business School starting to deliver 'Help to Grow Management' (HTG:M) – a programme accredited through the Small Business Charter - [About - Small Business Charter](#). Dorset Gateway was actively involved in recruitment and was able to support Bournemouth University to achieve its first cohort of around 20 businesses. The HTG:M programme is 12 weeks and supports senior managers to increase their business skills and recognise what drives productivity and growth. Topics include – Strategy & Innovation, Internationalisation and Growth Planning. A Business Relationship Officer from Dorset Gateway has and will continue to attend case study sessions which allows business to benefit from their knowledge and other areas of support available.

[Peer Networks](#) continues to be delivered across the county with business leaders gaining skills through shared expertise on topics such as leadership, business development and technology adoption. Dorset Gateway continue to work and deliver programmes in partnership with [Dorset Chamber of Commerce](#) and [Evolve](#) and in the current financial year, the programme has supported over 100 businesses with more to follow in the first part of 2022. Details on how to sign up are available [here](#).

Finally, Dorset Gateway continues to engage with businesses to help them recognise and understand the opportunities around people and skills. This includes referrals such as the [Dorset Careers Hub](#), local training providers and Apprenticeship awareness. Recent events attended included '[Disability Confident](#)' & '[Offender Recruitment](#)' and we will continue to ensure that businesses are made aware of the full range of opportunities.

## The Labour Market Information update

The [labour market dashboards](#) have been updated with the latest available data and the annual LMI & skills insights will be published later in January upon employment statistics release. As we enter 2022 and a fresh set of pandemic, supply chain and Brexit-related challenges, we will look back in more detail at the tumultuous 2021 labour market and reflect on its aftermath for the world of recruitment, employment, and skills in Dorset, but some quick current highlights include:

- **2021 was a year of strong jobs market**

It was a remarkable year on the recruitment front. In response to the ease of restrictions and switching the economy on, vacancies picked up in early spring and accelerated over the rest of the year in an unexpected and historic peak in labour demand, but it ended with a Christmas overshadowed by Omicron and a sharp drop in vacancies mirroring the decline last seen over the first lockdown in March 2020. Yet 2021 saw an aggregate record of 80,191 vacancies advertised in Dorset, which was 41% higher than 2020 and 28% higher than 2019.

- **Labour shortages and business confidence**

The peak in vacancies coincided with the number of available candidates falling sharply and worrying "labour shortage" reports flooding the press. This led to the business confidence in the UK economy falling by nine percentage points to a net: -6, according to REC's latest JobsOutlook survey which covers November 2021. This was

the first time the barometer fell into negative territory since February-April 2021, indicating that confidence is dropping, and further decline is expected at the end of 2021 and beginning of 2022 with uncertainty around rising inflation, labour shortages and the Omicron variant growing.

- **Earnings**

There have been reports that average wages have risen in response to the labour shortages nationally. Whilst earnings of those living in Dorset are on average around 6% lower than nationally, they have shown robustness over the past years, given the UK average is influenced by higher earnings within London and Greater South East. The ONS latest Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings Survey shows there was a small decline in 2020 followed by increase in 2021 that is argued to be in response of the labour shortages. However, there was a more pronounced decline of wages in Dorset brought by the pandemic in 2020, and whilst they have since been bouncing back, the gap has widened to 10% for those working in Dorset and 7% for those living in the county. ONS suggests exercising caution when comparing wages over the past two years as there are many temporary factors at play and the labour market is still volatile.

- **Employment and unemployment**

Latest ONS data shows employment rate in Dorset was 77% (vs 75% nationally) and unemployment was 4.3% (vs 5% nationally). This marks a small on year decline in employment bringing it back to 2018 reference and a more significant decline in unemployment taking it close to 2015 reference, but there was a continuous improvement on these figures throughout 2021. Unemployment increases are accounted by young people aged 16-24 (60%) and those aged 50-64 (40%).

There were 11,100 Dorset workers still on furlough in September 2021 when the scheme closed, but this has not led to subsequent rise in unemployment related benefits claimants, which in fact continued to decline in numbers in the subsequent months.

### **Dorset LEP Careers Hub Update**

- Significant analysis of our schools data has highlighted great achievements and trends, combined with weaknesses, which has enabled us to identify focus areas and where there is a need for specific intervention.
- Middle Schools have emerged as an area where key support is needed and a plan has been put into place to overcome current low attainment of targets. We are specifically working to improve EA representation and work experience in the cohort, which equates to 15% of the schools in our network.
- Our SEND schools also need greater support, and we will focus on engaging the SLT at these institutions to get renewed buy-in and in turn increase opportunities for the students.
- We have reviewed and re-engaged with our Cornerstone Employer Group and Lead Schools and some changes have been made to the members to ensure the support from these key support networks is felt and impact is seen. More new employers will be brought on board to boost the Cornerstone Group.
- T-Levels at Ferndown Upper School were launched, and we are working with Toby Osborne to proactively support their campaign.
- A locally based pre-eminent business trainer, Chris Croft, has done 4 classes with a career choice focus with pupils from Poole High, one of which was filmed and featured on the ITV Meridian news. This is a pilot scheme that Dorset Careers Hub is now working to roll out across the whole of Dorset, to benefit thousands of young people.

- We have recently bid for and been awarded funding for amplification of apprenticeships and technical qualifications which will see us run a research project, conference and a further initiative that aims to change perceptions of apprenticeships amongst key target groups.
- Consistent networking and meetings with local business groups, and companies, has increased our network, and more importantly the number of offers of work experience and EA's.
- Social media activity and our following has increased significantly which means that more people are aware of our presence and work and wanting to contribute and support.

### **3. RECOMMENDATION**

The Board are asked to particularly note the work of the Dorset Gateway Skills Brokerage and the skills support offered to business, along with the Labour Market Information review of 2021 and the impact of continuing Covid-19 and EU-exit challenges.

## **DRAFT MINUTES**

### **DORSET LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP BOARD**

**25 NOVEMBER 2021 FROM 10.00 AM TO 12.30 PM**

### **ZOOM MEETING**

### **MINUTES**

#### **Board Attendees:**

Arabella Lewis-Smith (AL)  
Cecilia Buffon (CB) (Chair)  
Diane Grannell (DG)  
Cllr Drew Mellor (DM)  
Emma Hunt (EH)  
Ian Girling (IG)  
Jim Andrews (JA)  
Jim Stewart (JS)  
Cllr John Beesley (JB)  
John Sutcliffe (JSu)  
Luke Rake (LR)  
Nick Gaines (NG)  
Nicola Newman (NN)  
Sara Uzzell (SU)  
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)  
Elizabeth Spence (ES) (BEIS)  
Erin Davey (ED) (BEIS)  
Finn Morgan (FM) (Dorset LEP)  
Graham Farrant (GF) (BCP Council)  
Kathryn Hill (KH) (Dorset LEP)  
Rebecca Davies (RD) (Dorset LEP)  
Sandra Rothwell (SR)

#### **Apologies:**

Andrew Wickham (AW)  
Paul Read (PR)  
Sophia Story (SS)

#### **Presenting:**

Paul Shand from DIT

Item	Notes and Decisions	Action
1.	<p>Apologies were received for: Andrew Wickham, Paul Read and Sophia Story</p> <p>There were no Declarations of Interest.</p>	
2.	<p>The Minutes were agreed as an accurate reflection of the last meeting. There were no matters arising.</p>	
3	<p><b>Interim Director’s Update</b></p> <p>CO said she would take her paper as read. She updated the Board that the LEP Review has been delayed and we are expecting this will be announced before the end of the year. She updated that we had a positive mid-year review with Cities and Local Growth Unit in September. CO updated the Board on the progress of the project pipeline and that the four selected outline business cases have inception meetings in November. It is anticipated the full business cases will be completed by the end of February.</p> <p>ES confirmed that the LEP Review outcome was expected by the end of the year and that the Levelling Up White paper had been de-coupled from the Comprehensive Spending Review. ES informed that plans to expand the British Banks Regional Fund to cover all of the South West had been announced and that Dorset Council had been successful with their Community Renewal Fund bids. Unfortunately, neither Levelling Up bids had been successful in Dorset but a meeting had been arranged with Dorset Council about the second round of funding planned in the spring.</p> <p>CB confirmed that we are feeding back about the impact of the uncertainty of the LEP Review and what the impact of this delay is causing on us to Government via the LEP Network.</p> <p>JB asked for a concise draft of the current LEP Review situation and impact to be provided to JB, DM, SF and TF who will make those representations to the MPs in their areas and then follow through with direct conversations with them.</p> <p><b>Action: CO to provide JB, DM, SF and TF with a paper detailing the impact in the delays in the LEP Review.</b></p> <p><b>All approved the following recommendations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is recommended the Board note the ongoing delay to the LEP review.</li> <li>• It is recommended the Board notes the positive outcomes of our reviews with government and corporate activity around the business case pipeline and supporting key sectors.</li> <li>• It is recommended the Board continue to delegate detailed oversight to the Dorset LEP FACR.</li> </ul>	<p>CO</p> <p>All approved</p>



Item	Notes and Decisions	Action
4.	<p><b>Chair's Update</b></p> <p>CB started by saying she would like to thank CO, RD and the Dorset LEP team for keeping momentum and delivery at pace. She confirmed that the work of the Great South West was still continuing and through this we are putting pressure on Government around the LEP Review.</p> <p>LR went on to say that they are working very hard with Karl Tucker from Heart of the South West LEP to prepare a rural briefing paper which was presented at the GSW All Party Parliamentary Group meeting and this was well received. LR mentioned he had an opportunity this afternoon to see a representative from the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries with Chris Loder this afternoon who is visiting Dorset today.</p> <p>CB updated that she attended the Business South conference dinner recently and had the opportunity to meet with a lot of southern businesses.</p>	
5.	<p><b>Guest Presentations</b></p>	
5.1	<p><b>DIT: UK Government's Export Strategy</b></p> <p>Paul Shand (PS) introduced himself and explained he is Head of Trade for the South West, Department of International Trade (DIT) and works to help businesses to export and drive investment into the region and is responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encouraging businesses to trade and ensuring they can access the support they need to grow overseas.</li> <li>• Promoting the South West as a destination for overseas investment.</li> <li>• Working with regional partnerships (including the Western Gateway) and other parts of government to help grow the South West economy.</li> </ul> <p>PS explained that the new campaign is 'Made in the UK, Sold to the World'. Dorset and Dorset businesses can adapt it to 'Made in Dorset, Sold to the World'. The campaign is flexible and can be made local. He set out the context in which the strategy is being launched and reminded the attendees that the pandemic has had a huge impact on exporters and that the UK is an independent trading nation now that we have left the European Union. He explained that the vast majority of exports have been to the EU and USA but the global economy is changing, especially in the India/pacific region and it is expected to see those economies grow. He stated there is an expectation that those markets will be equal to that of the G7 in export demand and that DIT are reaching out and pushing exporting businesses into new markets and that the UK exports around £1 trillion a year.</p> <p>He went on to run through the twelve point action plan. The Export Support Service was launched a few months ago as a single front door for businesses looking for help. The South West is one of the regions doing more activity to try and level up the economy across the UK. He stated the LEP was very much a part of this through ERDF fund.</p> <p>The UK Export Academy, which was successfully piloted in the South West, including Dorset, and this is for new exporters or companies that are interested</p>	

Item	Notes and Decisions	Action
<b>5.</b>	<b>Guest Presentations</b>	
	<p><b>DIT: UK Government's Export Strategy Cont'd</b></p> <p>in exporting. This initiative upskills those key staff within a company to start exporting and how to go about taking a product or services overseas.</p> <p>Export Networks is something DIT are trying to increase.</p> <p>UK Trade Show Programme is a tool available to businesses looking to go overseas and demonstrate their business.</p> <p>PS went on to update on what this means for Dorset. One of the key parts of the offer to businesses is the International Trade Advisor support; there are 30 advisors based in the south west and are skilled individuals, have been exporters and know the markets. They work with businesses to help develop a strategy and execute that strategy and work with overseas advisors. They are putting on a lot of events and look to Dorset LEP's Growth Hub to help promote those events. PS explained that that relationship is working very well in Dorset and they are working with Finn to see what more can be done with cross referrals.</p> <p>IG mentioned that there is currently a massive issue at the moment around logistics.</p> <p>PS explained that they know logistics is an immediate issue. The Government response at the moment is that this is a global issue and not just related to the UK. They are trying to help through the Export Supportive Service to give advice and support. If you have got that container stuck at a border, you can now go through DIT who can look at what the issue is and get in touch with colleagues abroad.</p> <p>IG questioned the role of the Dorset Chamber of Commerce as this had not yet been mentioned in the presentation. PS explained this was not a deliberate omission and said that DIT do work with the Chambers but that they need to do more. He said they want to work more closely with Dorset LEP to target companies, reaching out to investors overseas.</p> <p>CB thanked Paul for attending the meeting and presenting to us.</p>	
<b>6.</b>	<b>Governance</b>	
6.1	<p><b>Finance, Audit and Corporate Risk Committee (Confidential - Commercially Sensitive)</b></p> <p>DG took the paper as having been read and confirmed that the FACR Committee had seen the latest finance paper and approved it. She informed that since the meeting the second tranche of 2021/22 core funding had been received and the paper was updated to reflect this. DG updated on the outstanding action on the audit function and that it has been agreed with the Accountable Body that we would have up to 4 days a year of audit time used at the Committee's discretion. She said the earlier Board discussion had covered the LEP Review and confirmed there was nothing else she wished to bring to Board's attention today.</p> <p>She recommended the Board noted the finance paper and this was agreed.</p>	All noted

Item	Notes and Decisions	Action
<b>6.</b>	<b>Governance</b>	
6.2	<p><b>Nominations and Remuneration Committee (Confidential - Commercially Sensitive)</b></p> <p>JA noted the significant contribution from EH and DG to the LEP over the last few years and thanked them both. He mentioned that as EH and DG held nominated places on the Board, we have received notification of their replacements. We also have two new Board members joining and also have some Committee vacancies.</p> <p><b>The Board approved the recommendations in the paper below:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Board are recommended to approve appointing Paul Gough as the AUB representative, replacing Emma Hunt, as a Board Member and member of the CIC from 1 December 2021.</li> <li>• The Board are recommended to approve appointing Liz Williams and May Palmer as co-opted Board Members and members of the CIC, for a period of one year, from 1 December 2021, with the timescales outlined in this paper.</li> <li>• The Board are recommended to approve appointing Phil Sayles as the FE representative, replacing Diane Grannell, as a Board Member and member of the CIC from 1 January 2022.</li> <li>• The Board are recommended to note the appointing of Jim Stewart to replace Emma Hunt on the Nomination &amp; Remuneration Committee following a Written Procedure.</li> <li>• The Board are recommended to appoint a private May Palmer to join the Finance, Audit and Corporate Risk Committee as the Chair in the November Board meeting.</li> </ul>	All approved
6.3	<p><b>Performance and Investment Committee (Confidential - Commercially Sensitive)</b></p> <p>NN took the paper as read. She informed that the focus of the Committee has been keeping the money in Dorset and therefore the LEP team was carefully managing the Getting Building Fund projects, to ensure they deliver on time and on budget. NN stated that there are a couple of larger projects that the Committee felt should have a Board mentor. NG volunteered to mentor one of the projects and she asked for volunteers for the others to email CO.</p> <p>The Board approved all the recommendations in the paper.</p>	
<b>7.</b>	<b>Strategy</b>	
7.1	<p><b>Enterprise Zone Committee</b></p> <p>JSu took the paper as having been read. He explained that, in terms of growth of the site, he was comfortable in terms of progress and where we are and that the direction of travel is clear in terms of the investment plan.</p>	

Item	Notes and Decisions	Action
7.	<b>Strategy</b>	
7.1	<p><b>Enterprise Zone Memorandum of Understanding Cont'd</b></p> <p>CB thanked Tony Ferrari and John Sellgren for all the work they have put into this from Dorset Council side.</p> <p>CO said she took the late paper regarding the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) as read. She explained that Dorset LEP and Dorset Council have been working on an updated MoU and have sought independent advice on the recommendations presented in the paper. She advised the Board that for Dorset LEP and Dorset Council, the focus of the MoU is to maximise the success of the park at pace.</p> <p>CB thanked Tony Ferrari and John Sellgren for all the work they have put into this from Dorset Council side.</p> <p><b>The Board approved the recommendation in the paper:</b></p> <p>It is recommended the Board approves the creation of a Memorandum of Understanding for the Enterprise Zone, using the principles of the four funds articulated within this paper and its Appendix.</p>	All approved
7.2	<p><b>Business Growth and Inward Investment Committee</b></p> <p>FM said he will take the paper as read and that there are no formal recommendations, other than to note the positive outcome of the Growth Hub Annual Review with BEIS.</p> <p>JSu said the review of the Committee was ongoing, that there is great work going on with FM and the Gateway team and there will be an update on the outcome of the Committee review at a future Board meeting.</p> <p>CB asked FM to pass on the Board's thanks to the team for all the work they are doing.</p> <p><b>It is recommended the Board:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Notes the positive outcome of the Growth Hub Annual Review discussion with Government.</li> </ul>	The Board noted
7.3	<p><b>Strategic Infrastructure Committee</b></p> <p>NG informed that the Strategic Infrastructure Committee was largely about sharing and gathering information and was not yet in a mode of prioritising works. He advised the Board that the Committee is awaiting the outcome of the LEP Review to make sure they have the right focus and urged Board members to review the papers and minutes online.</p>	
7.4	<p><b>Skills Advisory Panel and Board</b></p> <p>EH said she would take the paper as read. She mentioned the Post 16 Skills Bill is currently making its way through Government. EH said there are lots of conversations about where skills fit, whether it is about skills for the here and now or skills for the future. The Skills Commission is looking at future skills needs,</p>	

Item	Notes and Decisions	Action
<b>7.</b>	<b>Strategy</b>	
7.4	<p><b>Skills Advisory Panel and Board Cont'd</b></p> <p>for 20/30/40 years' time and expressed her gratitude to Dorset LEP and the two councils for reaching this point.</p> <p>DM informed that BCP Council had a small cabinet reshuffle and one post that has been created is a Skills Lead. He stated they recognise the importance of the skills agenda and how it aligns to Levelling Up.</p> <p>EH thanked RD and all the team for all the work they are doing to support skills in the region.</p> <p>CB referenced the Constructing Excellence Group which she had recently attended and its link to schools, skills and apprenticeships.</p> <p>LR mentioned that the FE Colleges are very well linked into apprenticeships but there is certainly a gap between skills provision and work force demand and this is driven by national policy. He stated that Dorset should be increasing engagement in schools with Gatsby benchmark and the Chambers.</p> <p>DG said it is important that schools are required by the system to engage with skills and until people stop seeing the ideal progression as GCSEs, A Levels and university it is a challenge. She mentioned the influence of parents as being a major factor too and stated there needs to be a move from focusing on skills on a limited career basis – for instance a career in construction can include management and is not limited to labouring.</p>	
<b>8.</b>	<b>Papers for Information</b>	
8.1	<p><b>Advisory Group Updates</b></p> <p>The Board noted that the Dorset Tourism Association has been meeting every other month since the pandemic to discuss the impact on the industry. The key risks are around staffing and skills. It noted that the tourism impact for 2021 has been more like a normal season. For 2022 they will revert to quarterly meetings which will be themed and any Board members wishing to join one of these should contact CO.</p> <p>SU informed that in general tourism businesses are in reasonable shape but they are genuinely scared about skills and staffing. There is a need for collaboration and tourism is part of the 'what to do' with Dorset she emphasised that it does connect with export and attracting investment, digital, creative, sport and all the reasons people to come to live and work in this area. SU stated there is an optimistic outlook.</p> <p>NG suggested that in view of the global green agenda, there will be more domestic tourism. We already have a great offer but now we have the opportunity to significantly scale up. He asked what is Dorset doing to help create a sustainable step change in tourism income.</p> <p>SU mentioned the key is sustainable tourism, as Dorset is are already full in the summer. We need to get around the issue that we are seasonal and have an all year round, solid, sustainable tourism business.</p>	

Item	Notes and Decisions	Action
9.	<b>Any Other Business</b>	
	CB ended the meeting by thanking both DG and EH for everything they have done for the LEP, for their work on Committees and on behalf of the Board wish them all the very best.	

Note: Date of Next Meeting - 25 January 2022 at 1.30 pm

DRAFT

The papers for agenda Item 3.7 are not included as they are Commercially Sensitive

## DORSET LEP BOARD MEETING COVER SHEET

<b>Meeting Dates</b>	25 January 2022	<b>Item Number</b>	3.8
<b>Security Level:</b>	<b>Confidential</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Commercially Sensitive</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Unclassified</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>Paper Title</b>	Dorset Tourism Association Update		
<b>Recommendation</b>	None – for information only.		
<b>Papers are provided for:</b>	<b>Decision</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Discussion</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Information</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

### 1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this paper is to update the Board on recent Dorset Tourism Association (DTA) activity/discussions.

### 2. SUMMARY/BACKGROUND

During the Covid-19 pandemic, the DTA met every two months to discuss the impact of the pandemic on the tourism industry in the region. Now that visitor behaviour is normalising, the DTA will revert to quarterly meetings.

Each forthcoming DTA meeting will focus on a key theme:

12 <sup>th</sup> April 2022	Skills and staff
12 <sup>th</sup> July 2022	Access and connectivity
11 <sup>th</sup> October 2022	Promotion and branding

The DTA would like to invite Board Members who are Chairs (or a representative) of relevant subgroups to attend any of the above meetings to share their knowledge with the Committee, that will help inform policy/action for the DTA going forward.

The DTA meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> January 2022 focused on 'Products and Sustainability.'

Following discussion, the pertinent points to note are:

- 1) Best practice - The DTA can link with Local Authorities to raise awareness and share best practice around the themes of sustainability and products. This area was identified as a potential focus for a post-pandemic conference.
- 2) Conserving our local environment – the DTA could act as the key annual forum for businesses and local authorities to raise issues of mutual concern in protecting the Dorset environment on which tourism depends – e.g., the controls around illegal or unregulated camping.
- 3) National trends to which we need to respond:
  - a. there is an opportunity in Dorset to reduce the carbon footprint and environmental impact of food, by looking at source, supply, packaging, seasonal availability etc.



- b. There is widespread acceptance that the growth in electric vehicle use will have an impact on the tourism industry, but Dorset does not have the infrastructure to support the scale of EV use. A sub-group has been formed to further discuss this theme. The challenges and opportunities around the themes of food and EV would be strong topics for the basis of a tourism industry conference.

**Covid update:**

The impact of the current variant is limited as long as the tourism sector remains open.

**3. RECOMMENDATION**

None – for information only.

## DORSET LEP BOARD MEETING COVER SHEET

<b>Meeting Date</b>	25/01/2022	<b>Item Number</b>	3.8
<b>Security Level:</b>	<b>Confidential</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Commercially Sensitive</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Unclassified</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<b>Paper Title</b>	Rural Enterprise Advisory Group Update		
<b>Recommendation</b>	None - for information		
<b>Papers are provided for:</b>	<b>Decision</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Discussion</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Information</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

### 1. PURPOSE

To provide an update of the Rural Enterprise Group and the group's latest actions and discussions.

### 2. SUMMARY/BACKGROUND

Rural jobs are essential to the Dorset economy and the Rural Enterprise Group identifies and encourages the growth of private enterprise and prospects for jobs in the rural areas of the county.

A Local Plan update from Dorset Council was given by Jon Bird updating the group on the plans current stage and future timelines. Stage one has now completed and an indication on the direction the plan will take will be shared in due course. Two key areas were discussed the need for additional housing and the possibility of more solar farms.

Mira Koseva (Dorset LEP) presented on Dorset's Labour Market showing what appears to be a developing recovery position following the COVID pandemic with vacancies increasing and employment levels beginning to decline. The health sector has the most significant number of vacancies and this is greater in Dorset Council areas with health vacancies being a high proportion of overall positions here. Sectors seeing good growth in the Dorset Council areas are Hospitality, Food and Tourism, Business Management and Operations, Sales and Clerical whereas IT is decreasing. Concern regarding data not being able to capture how environmental/agricultural and land sectors recruit with concern over not reflecting the true opportunities in these sectors when the data is presented was raised.

Nicola Kilbunne from the Federation of Small Business gave a presentation on the pandemic and its impact on SME's. SME's are finding it hard not just due to the pandemic but also EU transition, skills/labour shortage and rising cost of living. The pandemic has had an impact on business confidence levels with levels in the South-West for the first time coming in below the national average perhaps due to increased levels of uncertainty and businesses not knowing what's coming next.

The group also discussed how many businesses are doing extremely well as a result of the pandemic with sectors such as construction experiencing high levels of business growth.

There seems to be a divide between businesses struggling and those doing well and this may be down to businesses ability to adapt and embrace change. The challenge of

digitalisation has been embraced by some business and not by others possibility due to lack/presence of skills and confidence in business owners using digital technology.

### **Members' Update**

The Country Land and Business Association Limited are busy with agriculture transition advising members as much as they can and rural diversification is a key aspect at the moment.

The Dorset Local Nature Partnership will apply for Environment Agency National Environment Investment Fund (2<sup>nd</sup> round) with a deadline of 3 February.

Luke Rake – aim to provide opportunity of Business Support Funding to Farmers to get additional guidance and help with the BPS to ELM transition

Dorset Council have secured a Community Renewable Fund for Young Enterprise to deliver an enterprising programme to school age children. Their Additional Restrictions Grant round has just closed and they received £7m worth of applications for £1.5m available funding.

### **Points raised for further discussion:**

The Group agreed to discuss keeping reward from farm scale renewables in Dorset at the next meeting in March.

### **3. RECOMMENDATION**

None - for information only.

**DORSET LEP BOARD MEETING COVER SHEET**

<b>Meeting Date</b>	25.01.22	<b>Item Number</b>	2.3
<b>Security Level:</b>	<b>Confidential</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>Commercially Sensitive</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Unclassified</b> <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Paper Title</b>	Nomination & Remuneration Committee Update		
<b>Recommendation</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Board are recommended to agree the second term appointments of Board members as detailed in the paper.</li> <li>• The Board are recommended to note a Board Composition Review will be undertaken once the outcome of the LEP Review is known.</li> <li>• The Board are recommended to note that in order to attract a more diverse Board membership Dorset LEP will invests resources in an external firm to recruit Board members.</li> </ul>		
<b>Papers are provided for:</b>	<b>Decision</b> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<b>Discussion</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	<b>Information</b> <input type="checkbox"/>

**1. PURPOSE**

The Nomination & Remuneration Committee are responsible for giving full consideration to succession planning for members of the Dorset LEP Board, taking into account the challenges and opportunities facing the company, and the skills and expertise needed on the Board in the future and are responsible for the recruitment process to fill all vacancies on the Board. This paper is a summary of discussion behind the recommendations made to the Board.

**2. SUMMARY/BACKGROUND**
**2.1 Board Member Term Renewals**

Dorset LEP is permitted to have up to twenty-two Board members and five co-opted members, in accordance with the Articles of Association. Members serve a three year term and have the option of extending for a second three year term. Co-opted members can serve a single one year term and this cannot be renewed.

The Board currently has nineteen members and two co-opted members. Three Board members have their first three-year terms ending March or April 2022. All three are valued members of our Board and Committees and they have been invited to remain on the Board for a second term. If agreed, the appointments will be confirmed at the January Board.

**2.2 Board Composition Review**

The Committee agreed Dorset LEP needs to review the current Board composition as soon as the outcome of the LEP Review is known, plan for the significant changes in Board members anticipated this year as well as making strides towards achieving equal gender balance of the Board as well as increasing its diversity in general.

They agreed for a Board composition review to be undertaken as a priority to identify gaps in skills and expertise once the outcome of the LEP review is known. The

Committee will receive the analysis and will agree the priority skills/experience for future Board members and this will be shared with the Board.

### **2.3 Board Recruitment**

Dorset LEP has previously recruited Board members through our website and targeted communications, but this has still resulted in a candidate pool often lacking in diversity. Other LEPs who achieve more diversity often use external recruitment firms to achieve this.

Given the requirement of Dorset LEP to achieve equal gender diversity by 2023 and the desire to have a more diverse Board membership, the Committee agreed Dorset LEP invests resources in an external firm to recruit Board members following the Board composition review.

## **3. RECOMMENDATION**

- The Board are recommended to agree the second term appointments of Board members as detailed in the paper.
- The Board are recommended to note a Board Composition Review will be undertaken once the outcome of the LEP Review is known.
- The Board are recommended to note that in order to attract a more diverse Board membership Dorset LEP will invests resources in an external firm to recruit Board members.