

**DORSET LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP BOARD**

**24 MARCH 2022 FROM 10.00 AM TO 12.30 PM**

**ZOOM MEETING**

**MINUTES**

**Board Attendees:**

Andrew Wickham (AW)  
Cecilia Buffon (CB) (Chair)  
Ian Girling (IG)  
Jim Andrews (JA)  
Jim Stewart (JS)  
Cllr John Beesley (JB)  
John Sutcliffe (JSu)  
Luke Rake (LR)  
May Palmer (MP)  
Nick Gaines (NG)  
Nicola Newman (NN)  
Paul Gough (PG)  
Paul Read (PR)  
Phil Sayles (PS)  
Sara Uzzell (SU)  
Sophia Story (SS)  
Cllr Spencer Flower (SF)  
Cllr Tony Ferrari (TF)

**Also Present:**

Aidan Dunn (AD) (Dorset Council)  
Corinne Lancaster (CL) (BEIS)  
Corrina Osborne (CO) (Dorset LEP)  
Daniela Doncakova (DD) (Dorset LEP)  
Elizabeth Spence (ES) (BEIS)  
Jon Bird (JBd) (Dorset Council)  
Kathryn Hill (KH) (Dorset LEP)  
Matt Prosser (MPr) (Dorset Council)  
Rebecca Davies (RD) (Dorset LEP)

**Apologies:**

Arabella Lewis-Smith (AL)  
Cllr Drew Mellor (DM)  
Liz Williams (LW)

**Presenting:**

Deborah Smart (Dorset Council, Corporate Director, Digital and Change)  
Dugald Lockhart (Dorset Council)

Item	Notes and Decisions	Action
1.	<p>Apologies were received for: Arabella Lewis-Smithl, Cllr Drew Mellor, Liz Williams</p> <p>Declarations of Interest: No additional conflicts were declared.</p>	
2.	<p><b>Guest Presentation</b></p>	
	<p><b>Digital Dorset</b></p> <p>CO introduced Deborah Smart (DS) and Dugald Lockhart (DL) who were presenting an update on Digital Dorset.</p> <p>DS introduced herself as the Corporate Director for Digital and Change for Dorset Council. DL referenced that the digital infrastructure needed for Dorset is outlined in the Dorset Investment Prospectus and highlighted that digital is required in all aspects of our lives and the strategic aims around digital are critically important to the economy of Dorset. He referenced how the pandemic has changed working patterns and the increased importance of ensuring strong fibre connections in our homes and maintaining it for the future. He explained there are major projects which are commercially funded underway in Dorset and spoke about the innovation accelerator, the indoor and outdoor private networks around the Battlelab at the Innovation Park.</p> <p>DS highlighted that as a result of the changes due to the pandemic, there is an expectation of everything being digital and for this to be available and working 24 hours a day. She advised the council are working with Bournemouth University on accelerating measures to address digital exclusion and highlighted that connectivity is part of the levelling up agenda. DS stated that there needs to be a collective approach to raising awareness as to the support that is available and ran through some examples in health and social care and transport.</p> <p>DL explained that Dorset needs to maintain its competitive edge which is a challenge as technology moves very quickly as does the commercial advantage associated with it.</p> <p>PG mentioned the pandemic has given higher and further education sectors unique opportunities in online learning and skills development but has also revealed digital divide and digital poverty across sections of our learning communities.</p> <p>LR mentioned that the increase in blended learning and working has created increased pressure on Dorset housing market. LR asked if there is a connection between the digital infrastructure and the housing market and affordability</p> <p>MPr emphasised the importance of remembering that council local plans are about housing and economic growth but critically within that is making the right connections. She stated that digital infrastructure is at the heart of that and need opportunities for young people to learn and stay in Dorset.</p> <p>JSu agreed and added that when building a new development where lots of people will live, infrastructure, digital, all have to be part of the conversation around a large development.</p>	

Item	Notes and Decisions	Action
2.	<b>Guest Presentation Cont'd</b>	
	<p><b>Digital Dorset Cont'd</b></p> <p>SF explained he had a conversation with Michael Gove a couple of weeks ago, setting out ambitions in Dorset including exploring the needs of the local area and being more strategic and realistic of various aspects of living in Dorset. He informed the Board that Dorset Council want to see young people flourish, stay in the county, work in the county and raise a family in the county.</p> <p>JB emphasised the need to ensure Dorset is an attractive place to live and this includes issues such as graduate retention and infrastructure and that it is essential to have a strategic view of housing.</p>	
3.	<b>For Decision / Discussion</b>	<b>Action</b>
3.1	<p><b>Interim Director's Update</b></p> <p>CO ran through a presentation highlighting the achievements of the LEP through the year. She reminded the Board that it was announced that a national review would take place in March/April 2021 with an estimated completion date of July. Last month we had the Levelling Up White Paper which gave an indication as to the direction of travel with more information and funding details to come in a few weeks which we are still waiting to receive.</p> <p>In terms of governance, throughout the year she advised that our committees have continued to meet and that Dorset LEP has continued to actively participate in groups such as the Great South West, South West Energy Hub, Maritime UK, engage in All Party Parliamentary Groups and so forth. She stated that we also continued to write to our MPs, participate in LEP Network activity and pursued keeping partners engaged.</p> <p>In the summer, we had our mid-year conversation with Government, as well as our Growth Hub annual review around the same time and between summer and winter a turnover in Board members.</p> <p>CO advised that earlier this year we had our Annual Performance Review with government.</p> <p>In terms of delivery, Dorset LEP released, or participated in, important strategic documents over the last year. This includes the Investment Prospectus, Low Carbon Energy Opportunities, Reimagining the Visitor Economy, Dorset Connectivity, Agritech Positioning Paper, Skills Report and started work on the One Health Nucleus Pilot.</p> <p>CO informed the Board that under Business support Dorset LEP continued to deliver peer networks, bid writing, support, supply chain work, EU transition activity, High Potential Opportunities, and sector work. Under Skills we continued to deliver Dorset Careers Hub, midlife MOT, skills bootcamps, produced Labour Market Insight information and provided T level and apprenticeships support. In partnership, we've held 850 Virtual Work Experience</p>	

Item	Notes and Decisions	Action
<b>3.</b>	<b>For Decision / Discussion</b>	<b>Action</b>
3.1	<p><b>Interim Director's Update Cont'd</b></p> <p>Insight Days for young people across Dorset. Our Virtual Careers and Apprenticeship Show was a major success and attracted a staggering attendance - more than 20,000 students, 400 teachers, as well as parents and carers attended, plus over 64 exhibitors hosting online booths which were visited over 34,000 times for work and study related questions.</p> <p>Under capital programme the team continued to deliver capital, ensuring our entire loan amount available has been loaned out, the ongoing management of Local Growth Fund projects, enterprise zone and creating a project pipeline. CO informed the Board that the Local Growth Fund programme evaluation undertaken this year shows the programme generated 8k jobs, 5k new homes, 11k apprenticeships, 68k learners assisted, almost 250m square metres of new commercial floorspace, is anticipated to have leveraged £806m private investment by 2025 and generated £331m GVA per year. The return-on-investment is anticipated to be £15.70 for every £1 spent. In addition to all the quantitative benefits, the programme was evidenced to have also raised the profile and image of Dorset, delivered catalytic benefits to our economy, unlocked partnership and collaboration across the public and private sectors and enabled cluster growth.</p> <p>CO advised that our Growing Places Fund has invested in 13 projects and the two most recent loans this year were linked to our low carbon strategy one of which is the £3m Dorset Green H2 project which is a green energy project in hydrogen production.</p> <p>In terms of working with partners, we're working with our Local Authorities and other South West LEs to create a South West Maritime Innovation Service proposal and we have also been working with Dorset Coastal Forum and other stakeholder business to create an English Aquaculture Innovation Hub.</p> <p>CO informed the Board that in terms of strategic impact, we worked with our partners on the Investment Prospectus which has four key themes – smart, living, wellbeing and natural and offers a portfolio of investment opportunities that would generate a £24bn GVA return over the next 10 years and generate 48k jobs.</p> <p>She continued that we also produced the Dorset Low Carbon Investment Opportunities document and underpinning this is a comprehensive evidence base which presents a range of opportunities for decarbonising Dorset to help the region deliver on net zero, jobs and green recovery.</p> <p>CO stated that the Dorset Local Skills Report also required extensive partnership working and intelligence gathering and this is the go-to evidence base for local skills insights and initiatives. It offers a reflection on Dorset's skills journey to date and outlines the strategic direction of travel that'll enable prosperity going forwards.</p> <p>She informed the Board that the annual report captures even more highlights from the year and will be shared with them.</p>	

Item	Notes and Decisions	Action
<b>3.</b>	<b>For Decision / Discussion</b>	<b>Action</b>
3.1	<p><b>Interim Director's Update Cont'd</b></p> <p>CO concluded by thanking the Dorset LEP team who have continued their outstanding delivery, including continuing to be national exemplars in several areas, despite having uncertainty due to the LEP review. She said their dedication to their roles and passion for making Dorset better, despite their personal circumstances throughout this time deserves special recognition.</p> <p>CB thanked Corina for all her work and stated that she has done an amazing job as Interim Director in very difficult circumstances.</p>	
3.2	<p><b>Delivery Plan and Budget (Confidential - Commercially Sensitive)</b></p> <p>CO and SR set the context for the plan which included the known unknowns, LEP role and functions, governance as well as capacity and resourcing.</p> <p>The headline objectives of the plan and actions against each of these as set out in the Board paper were presented along with KPIs.</p> <p><b>Action: The Board approved all the recommendations in the paper.</b></p>	All approved
3.3	<p><b>Nominations and Remuneration Committee (Confidential - Commercially Sensitive)</b></p> <p>JA explained that the last meeting covered three items - recruitment of director, Board composition review and recruitment of future Board members. He advised all are currently on hold until there is greater clarity from government regarding LEPs.</p> <p>JA advised that JS's second term as a Board member is coming to an end shortly which would be a particular loss to the Enterprise Zone Committee. It was, therefore, proposed that JS be offered a role on the Enterprise Zone Committee as an independent member for a year following the end of his term and CB to join this Committee as Board member.</p> <p>CB and JSu left the meeting whilst the Board voted.</p> <p><b>Action: The Board approved the proposal.</b></p> <p>CB and JSu re-joined the meeting.</p>	All approved
3.4	<p><b>Finance, Audit and Corporate Risk Committee (Confidential - Commercially Sensitive)</b></p> <p>MP took the paper as read and outlined the discussion that took place in the FACR Committee meeting.</p> <p><b>Action: It is recommended the Board notes the Finance Report 2021/22</b></p>	All noted

Item	Notes and Decisions	Action
<b>4.</b>	<b>For Information / To Note</b>	
4.1	<b>Chair's Update</b>  CB informed she has attended a number of meetings with the Great South West and mentioned a document relating to the public procurement of food in the South West and the issues relating to farming.	
4.2	<b>Performance and Investment Committee (Confidential - Commercially Sensitive)</b>  NN congratulated CO on her leadership over the last year, helped by RD. The Board discussed the recommendations in the report.  <b>Action: The Board noted all the recommendations in the report.</b>	
4.3	<b>Business Growth and Inward Investment Committee</b>  JSu said following the update by CO on the work of Dorset LEP this year, staff involved in business growth and inward investment should be applauded. He stated that the Committee itself will be changed drastically as per the delivery plan item but emphasised the importance of retaining the expertise of the committee members.  <b>Action: The Board noted the recommendations below:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• notes the achievements of the delivery outlined including Back to Business and Peer Networks.</li> <li>• notes the current 2021/22 data for new business starts across the Dorset LEP region.</li> </ul>	All noted
4.4	<b>Enterprise Zone (Confidential - Commercially Sensitive)</b>  JSu updated the Board on the Battlelab and advised that the Enterprise Zone Investment Plan is continuing to be implemented by Dorset Council. He advised that the Innovation Park attracts many visitors.	
4.5	<b>Skills Advisory Panel and Board</b>  LR thanked RD for pulling together the report. He updated that the Dorset Local Skills Plan has now been formally released and there has been good media coverage of it. He advised that the Councils have now agreed a Skills Commission across Dorset and the LEP is taking this forward.  <b>Action: The Board noted the strategic input and operational delivery of skills.</b>	All noted
4.6	<b>Minutes of last meeting and matters arising</b>  The Minutes were agreed as an accurate reflection of the last meeting.	
<b>5.</b>	<b>Any Other Business</b>	
	CB informed the Board that Bella Lewis-Smith term as a Board member has expired and thanked her for all her work as a Board member.	
	CO mentioned that the Port of Poole has an art installation being installed to mark the end of the project and requested if any Board member can attend the press coverage to let her know.	

Item	Notes and Decisions	Action
5.	<b>Any Other Business</b>	
	<p>CO informed the Board that Corinne Lancaster (CL) will taking over as the Dorset Area Lead.</p> <p>CL introduced herself and said she has just joined CLGU, as Deputy Area Lead for Cornwall, Isle of Scilly and Dorset. She has worked previously with the Local Resilience Forum for Dorset and was looking forward to working with the Board.</p> <p>CO explained that this will be Elizabeth's last Board meeting, as she will be handing over her work with Dorset to Corrine and thanked her for her support and work with Dorset LEP. ES said it has been great working with Dorset LEP and she will continue to champion for Dorset.</p> <p>CB thanked her for all her work and advice and wished her luck with her new role.</p>	

Note: Date of Next Meeting - 24 May 2022 at 1.30 pm