

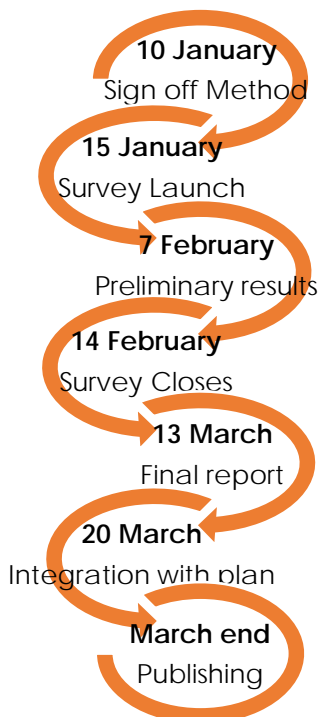
## Skills Advisory Panel and Board – 11<sup>th</sup> February meeting Item 6, Annex 5: Dorset 2020 Employer Skills Survey: update

Date: 31 January 2020  
Mira Koseva – DLEP Skills Analyst

### Background

Understanding the current and expected local economy developments has been at the forefront of the emerging Dorset People and Skills Plan. Following the publication of the Dorset Local Industrial Strategy evidence base in 2019, further inquiry was seen as necessary into the skills demand and supply in Dorset and the implications of identified landscape characteristics, such as ageing workforce, rural geography, trends in digitalisation, automation, and expected effects of Brexit on the organisational performance, growth and productivity of Dorset employers.

This research was funded by the European Social Fund (ESF) and co-financed by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) as part of the Skills Support for the Workforce (SSW) programme where Serco were invited as prime contractor nationally. Serco were commissioned to engage a specialist research company and investigate between 200 and 400 organisations across all sectors in Dorset with a focus on established and growth sectors on behalf of Dorset LEP. The themes of the research were distributed to SAPB members for comments following the meeting in November 2019.



According to the original timelines, the procurement process was to be concluded by the end of October 2019 and final report launched in February 2020. However, due to unforeseen staffing circumstances, the research company – Winning Moves - was appointed by Serco in December 2019.

Following the appointment, talks were held on the survey method, themes and distribution, briefly outlined below. The final method was discussed between Dorset LEP, Serco and Winning Moves and signed off on January 10.

**The survey launched on 15th January and is open until 14th February.**

The Final report will be considered as part of the later iterations of the Dorset People and Skills Plan and published as part of a key Skills documentation pack by the end of Q1 2019.

### Sampling

Aiming to secure responses from any Dorset employers, ensuring representation of **different sectors, different sizes, geographic areas across Dorset.**

### Method

Online survey initially and parallel telephone survey commencing on 4<sup>th</sup> February to maximise overall response rate and ensure a more representative and robust sample and results.

## Dissemination

- Through intermediaries (DLEP Board Members, Dorset Chamber of Commerce, Enterprise Advisors, Dorset Ambassadors etc) - wide range of individuals and organisations promoting the survey
- Incentive of a prize draw (for a free 2-hour business evaluation and advice consultancy session with an external growth expert) for completed surveys.
- Introduction outlining the immediate and longer term benefits to employers of participating in the survey e.g. design and provision of support on skills.
- Press release, strong communication plan and presence in websites, social media and using events (i.e. Apprenticeship Week)
- Direct invitations to key partners, companies of particular significance.

## Themes

- **Identifying skills gaps:** Do they have skills gaps in current workforce and in which sets of skills?
- **Implications for business:** What are the skills gaps implications on the business? Acting as constraints on their growth?
- **Estimated needs:** The skills requirements in the medium-to-long term. Estimates of future technology-driven skills requirements?
- **Response to economic and demographic trends:** What are the effects of aging workforce, skills utilisation, diversity, location, Brexit on the ability to recruit and retain?
- **Links with educational providers:** How are they meeting skills requirements? Engage with local skills providers? If not, why?
- **Recruitment approach:** How do they recruit? Do they engage directly with local colleges?
- **Innovation and effects on people:** Do they foresee greater automation/ digitalisation of processes, and the effects on the 'people' component? Do they feel well positioned (in terms of staff skills) for increased digitalisation?
- **In-house training:** Does the business provide any formal skills training e.g. apprenticeships? If so what level. Again, if not why?

## Update from Winning Moves – as of 30<sup>th</sup> January COB

60 complete responses to date (34 partials): 6 public sector, 20 third and 34 private sector responses.

- 4 Accommodation and food
- 1 construction
- 9 education
- 14 human health and social work
- 1 information and communication
- 2 manufacturing
- 5 professional, scientific and technical activities
- 1 public administration and defense
- 1 transport and storage
- 2 wholesale and retail trade.
- 19 'other' - a large proportion can be re-coded into the categories above