

DORSET LEP SKILLS ADVISORY PANEL & BOARD
15 March 2021, 2 pm-4pm

Virtual meeting via Teams

AGENDA

#		Item	Lead	Purpose	Annex
1		Welcome, introductions and apologies	Emma Hunt Chair	ACTION Welcome, introduce attendees and note apologies	
2		Approval of minutes of last meeting – Nov 2020	Emma Hunt Chair	ACTION To agree minutes as read and action updates	1
3	Recovery	Current Skills Activities	Rebecca Davies	ACTION Paper to note, for onward circulation to DLEP Board including: SAP Board Local Market Information (LMI) update Dorset LEP Careers Hub update Other skills initiatives	2
			Steph Stimpson, DWP	DWP update	
			Rod Davies, DSTN	Apprenticeship Update	
4	Place	Local Skills Report 2021	Rebecca Davies & Mira Koseva	ACTION Verbal update	
		BCP Towns Fund update	Adrian Trevett & Lesley Spain	Verbal Update	
5	Future	Investment prospectus	Emma Hunt	ACTION Verbal update	
		Skills Commission	Emma Hunt	Verbal update	
		Skills for Jobs white paper	Luke Rake, KMC	Presentation	
6	AOB		All		

DORSET LEP BOARD MEETING COVER SHEET

Meeting Date	25.03.21	Item Number	
Security Level:	Confidential <input type="checkbox"/>	Commercially Sensitive <input type="checkbox"/>	Unclassified <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Paper Title	Dorset LEP Programmes Skills Advisory Panel and Board Update		
Recommendation	For Information		
Papers are provided for:	Decision <input type="checkbox"/>	Discussion <input type="checkbox"/>	Information <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 January and March 2021.

2. SUMMARY

- **Local Skills Report**

The SAPB have discussed and directed the drafting of the Local Skills Report in alignment with Department for Education (DfE) requirements. The Local Skills Report was delivered to the DfE on the 5th Feb for their review and advisory comments. Their comments were largely positive and we were asked to share chapters with other LEPs to share best practice. The Local Skills Report includes the skills strategy for Dorset, highlighting the skills strengths and needs of the county and contains the action plan for skills development in Dorset. A final draft of the report will be shared with Board members via email.

3. 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 Boot Camps** – we have secured places on these free training opportunities for Dorset residents in wave 1 and 2, working in partnership with Heart of the SW LEP. These are digital and technical skills courses, funded by the DfE and designed to enable a change of skill set. Each participant is guaranteed a job interview at the end of the course. Wave 1 is currently delivering the learning, wave 2 courses are open for registration for an April start.
- **Mid-life MOT** – DLEP were successful in their bid to DWP for funds to support an innovative mid-life MOT for employees aged 50+. The funding is aimed to support older workers remain in relevant employment, giving greater quality of health and prosperity in retirement. The project is currently live, with a week of promotion in April delivering detailed information sessions around financial choices, skills updates and wellbeing.
- **LMI training for Dorset Job Centres and Work Coaches** – we have continued to delivery training for the 3 job centres in Dorset, and the 100 Dorset work coaches employed to support those who are looking for work. Our training enables work

- coaches to advise and guide people back to sustainable work, based on the statistics relevant to Dorset around required skills sets, employers and future opportunities.
- **Restart Programme** – DWP are investing £2.9bn in a Restart programme to help those who have been out of work for 1yr+ get back into work. We have been supporting the tender process to ensure the strategic needs of Dorset are embedded with the provision, and the provider is able to deliver relevant support to Dorset residents.
 - **An Hour to skill** – In January we promoted the DfE initiative to encourage everyone to take an hour a week to learn a new skill. This programme continues and with free learning opportunities available to all.
 - **Bidding support** – we have supported the Health Foundation bid for innovation in healthcare, lead by University Hospitals Dorset, and a bid to the Health Alliance relating to Health Economies and support for areas of deprivation (CCG/DC lead).
 - **T level support** – Ferndown Upper School will offer Dorset's first T level qualification in Sept 2022, and we are supporting the school as they move to this target date.
 - **Apprenticeship myth busting** – we have secured funding from the CEC to complete a programme of work to increase the number of apprenticeships offered in Dorset and support decision making in schools around apprenticeships. This work is funded to Aug 2022.

4. The Labour Market Information update

The **latest labour market insights dashboard** and updated **key industries dashboards** with current vacancies and job trends will be released on 11th March. A new Apprenticeship finder dashboard has been developed with DSTPN and will also be released shortly. Please check <https://www.dorsetlep.co.uk/labour-market-and-skills-research> for latest figures and analysis. Key early findings:

- **Recruitment activity slower at the start of the year**

As we entered the New Year and a new lockdown simultaneously, vacancies were unsurprisingly sluggish in January of 2021 compared to the previous years (down by a fifth on January 2020 in Dorset and by a quarter UK-wide). Vacancies also slightly declined in January from their December levels (down 2%, up 5% UK wide). However, despite the continued lockdown, the difference narrowed in February (down by only 4% in February compared to same time last year, 6% UK reference).

There were 10,262 vacancies advertised in Dorset in the first two months of 2021, which is 87% of their 2020 reference levels before the COVID-19 pandemic arrived. Demand declined for service roles, but it considerably increased for nurses and carers, accountants, lawyers, web developers and cleaners.

- **Unemployment and Furlough**

There were 4.6 claimants for each advertised vacancy in February- a ratio three times as high as the pre-crisis levels, but showing improvement from the 7.5 peak in May.

Claimant count remains high, accounting for 5% of the 16+ residents and 7% of 18- 24 year olds. Furloughed workers have increased again. The UK unemployment rate, in the three months to December 2020, was estimated at 5.1%, 1.3 percentage points higher than a year earlier and 0.4 percentage points higher than the previous quarter. In Dorset unemployment is traditionally lower with latest figures from September at 3.4%.

- **Top employers in Dorset at the start of 2021**

While the National Health Service continued to be the top recruiter followed by J.P.Morgan, Bournemouth University, the Councils and residential care firms, Checkatrade joined the top of the chart as they are expanding in the South West and the Office for National Statistics was recruiting to support the Census.

5. Dorset LEP Careers Hub Update

The Dorset Careers Hub is now half-way through the academic year. The operating context has been challenging due to the pandemic, which has greatly affected our school partners on which we depend to achieve impact. Despite this, the Hub has made good progress in many areas.

All six main projects are now underway and are on track to deliver their goals. Some of the highlight activities and impacts are as follows:

Project	Activities
Programme Planning	Intensive support and CPD provided to new schools, and Benchmark scores are improving.
Activation Fund	33 school bids funded, to kick start new school careers activities.
Inclusive Careers	Steering group formed, comprising businesses, parent groups, DWP, FE colleges, special school and learning centres.
Virtual Work Experience	Pilot underway, and summer programme offering placements to 2,000 students on track.
Online Careers and Apprenticeships Show	Major event with 60 companies, 7 universities, 15 colleges and thousands of students under development.
LMI Dissemination	CPD session delivered to Careers Leaders across county.

Looking forward, The Careers & Enterprise Company have received confirmation for programme funding from the Department for Education and will begin discussions with LEPs in due course.

And on the policy front, the Government released the Skills for Jobs white paper which affirms its commitment to the Careers Hub model and a commitment to the Skills agenda as a driver of economic growth and renewal. The key themes of the white paper are;

1. Business taking a central role in all skills proposals and investments
2. The elevation in status of technical education
3. Local Skills Improvement Plans to drive investment in local economic priorities
4. Identification of careers education as a key driver

There is now a consultation process underway, which will lead to legislation which will clearly be very relevant to the LEP and Careers Hub.

Financially, the Careers Hub has been able to deliver its main project with less than the budgeted expenditure, and is therefore currently considering new proposals for projects which can be initiated this year.

6. Apprenticeship update

Rod Davis reported the increased levels of apprenticeship opportunities that Dorset had seen in the last month, which was particularly good news as we work towards recovery whilst remaining under Covid-19 government regulation. The Dorset and Somerset Training Provider Network (DSTPN) continue to undertake work to promote and develop apprenticeships across Dorset and the DLEP team would be working closely with the DSTPN to further provide support for businesses and schools aiming to increase apprenticeships in Dorset.

7. DWP Opportunities

Steph Simpson highlighted the success of Kickstarter applications, and the current task within DWP to match unemployed young people who are on Universal Credit, with available roles. Kickstarter are paid work placement opportunities offered by employers who have the potential for a new role. In addition the DWP have recruited further job coaches in Dorset to support re-employment, along with reskilling and training. Job coaches would be available via a new pop up job centre in Tringham House, Bournemouth on an appointment basis.