### **DORSET PERFORMANCE AND INVESTMENT COMMITTEE**

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| **Meeting Date** | 12 January 2022 | | |
| **Security Level:** | **Confidential ☒** | **Commercially Sensitive ☒** | **Unclassified ☐** |
| **Paper Title** | Dorset LEP Programmes - Delivery Update | | |
| **Papers are provided for:** | **Decision ☒** | **Discussion ☒** | **Information ☒** |

**SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS AND NOTES:**

**Getting Building Fund**

* **Note:** The Committee notes the Getting Building Fund financial and programme update, including risks identified.

**Local Growth Fund**

* **Note:** The Committee notes the Local Growth Fund Programme update.

**Growing Places Fund**

* **Note:** The Committee notes the Growing Places Fund financial and programme update, including risks identified.

**Dorset Gateway**

* **Note:** The Committee notes the Dorset Gateway financial and programme update, including risks identified.

**Skills**

* **Note:** The Committee notes the skills financial and programme update, including risks identified.

## Purpose

This paper gives an overview of Dorset LEP programme delivery. It is accompanied by several annexes, which are all classified as confidential due to containing commercially sensitive information:

* Annex 1: November 2021 meeting minutes – confidential
* Annex 2: Getting Building Fund – grant programme overview – confidential
* Annex 3: Growing Places Fund – loan programme overview - confidential
* Annex 4: Growing Places Fund – 5-year forecast – confidential

**A) GETTING BUILDING FUND (GBF)**

**Annex 2** provides a high-level overview of Getting Building Fund projects; outlining risks and progress.

The Getting Building Fund Programme actual spend to date is £6.7m.

**Note: The Committee notes the Getting Building Fund financial and programme update, including risks identified.**

**B) LOCAL GROWTH FUND PROGRAMME**

**DORSET LOCAL GROWTH FUND – PROGRAMMATIC AND FINANCIAL UPDATE**

The delivery of outcomes and match funding continues to be monitored and reported until March 2025. There has been some changes and minor delays projected in outcome delivery mainly due to Covid-19. There has been increase in houses and apprenticeships forecast and decrease in new learners. The overall Programme delivery of outcomes is on track.

As of Q2, £62m of match funding has been delivered, with further £11.8m to be delivered up to March 2025.

As of Q2, the LGF Programme has delivered the following outcomes:

2,538 houses

3,205 jobs (including safeguarded jobs)

3,357 apprenticeships

15,305 sqm of learning floorspace

90,177 sqm commercial floorspace

54 businesses supported

20.5 km of road resurfaced

3.5 km of newly built road

11.1 km of new cycle ways

**Local Growth Fund Projects - End of Project Reports**

The projects below have now submitted their End of Project Reports. You can read about the success of the projects and future projected outcomes on our Dorset LEP website.

* **AUB –** [**Innovation Resources**](https://www.dorsetlep.co.uk/innovation-resources)
* **BCP Council/ Dorset Council** [**BIG Programme – End of Programme report**](https://www.dorsetlep.co.uk/userfiles/files/BIG%20Programme%20-%20End%20Programme%20Report%20final%20docx(5).pdf)
* **BCP –** [**Smart Place Pilot**](https://www.dorsetlep.co.uk/userfiles/files/Final%20End%20Project%20Report(1).pdf)
* **BCP –** [**Lansdown Business District**](https://www.dorsetlep.co.uk/userfiles/files/Final%20End%20of%20Project%20Report.pdf)

A summary of LGF Programme outcomes per project (including other Dorset LEP Programmes) can be found in our latest project[**Dashboard**](https://www.dorsetlep.co.uk/userfiles/files/Dorset%20LEP_Dashboard%20Q1%202021.xlsx)**.**

**Note: The Committee notes the Local Growth Fund Programme update.**

**C) DORSET GROWING PLACES FUND**

**Annexes 3 and 4** provide high level overview of Growing Places Fund projects.

**Growing Places Fund Financial Overview**

To date, the Fund has invested into 13 projects, 12 of which are loans and 1 is a grant. As of today, 7 projects are complete with loans repaid. There are currently 5 outstanding loans.

**Note: The Committee notes the Growing Places Fund financial and programme update, including risks identified.**

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**D) UPDATE ON ONGOING DORSET GATEWAY PROJECTS**

Dorset Gateway has funding linked to delivery targets or specific contracts. An overview of performance to date in these areas is provided below.

**Enquiry management**

An overview of business engagements recorded for the period between 1 April 2018 and 30 November 2021 is presented below in ***figure 1***. The targets have been agreed with the Department for Business Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) and are reflected in the delivery contracts issued to partners. These figures do not include any enquiries relating to Peer Networks as these are captured elsewhere.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **2018/19** | | **2019/20** | | **2020/21** | | **2020/21** | | |
| **Engagement Level** | **No. Businesses Engaged** | **Target** | **No. Businesses Engaged** | **Target** | **No. Businesses Engaged** | **Target** | **No. Businesses Engaged** | **Target** | **Progress against target** |
| Light touch  (up to 1hr) | 679 | 600 | 1,099 | 900 | 1,410 | 800 | 563 | 800 | 70% |
| Medium intensity  (1hr+ - 8hrs) | 219 | 120 | 483 | 180 | 359 | 150 | 272 | 150 | 181% |
| High intensity  (8hrs+) | 55 | 60 | 85 | 90 | 64 | 50 | 19 | 50 | 38% |

***Figure 1****: Business engagements by intensity for period 01/04/18 – 30/11/21.*

All figures are subject to ongoing audit checks via our customer relationship management (CRM) tool. Figures are cumulative based on the number of hours support that each business or individual receives. The large number of medium intensity assists reflects the increase in Dorset Gateway delivered events (such as workshops and masterclasses) as well as the increased number of customer facing staff available to provide business support.

As figures are cumulative, it is normal for high intensity interactions to be lower at the start of the year. As businesses engage over the course of the year, then the number of hours they spend accessing business support programmes increase. Whilst ‘High Intensity’ engagements are slightly lower than we would have projected at this stage in the year, the number of ‘Medium Intensity’ engagements is significantly higher. As a result, we are confident that a number of these will convert into High Intensity engagements over the coming months to ensure we meet our target.

**Peer Networks Programme**

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

**Back to Business: BCP Council’s Bounce Back Challenge Fund**

This project will officially start from September onwards and we are aiming to engage around 100 businesses in this new programme of support. This figure is one that we have set; it is not specified contracted target attached to this funding. As of 14 December, there were 62 enquiries made by businesses located in the BCP Council area. 34 of these are active enquiries and 21 have engaged in a business diagnostic using the GROWTHMapper tool.

Following a public procurement exercise in November, appointed management specialists Evolve Members and web and marketing agency Digital Storm as delivery partners to provide the tailored specialist support element of this programme. 15 enquiries have so far involved review meetings with businesses and are being assessed for further support where businesses can receive up to £2,000 of specialist, ongoing support.

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

**Bid Writing Support Service (BWSS)**

Building on the success of last year’s performance, our BWSS has continued to work with local SMEs with the aim of helping them to secure innovation and research-based funding. This includes working with six local SMEs on applications for recent or upcoming funding rounds which total in excess of £1,000,000.

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Measure** | **Target** | **Progress against target** |
| Number of days support provided | 80 | 43.5 |
| Number of businesses engaged | 250 | 199 |
| Grant funding applications submitted | 10 | 14 |
| Customer satisfaction | 80% | 67% |

***Figure 2****: Bid writing support KPIs for period 01/04/21 – 21/12/21.*

Whilst the number of days support is below target, this is calculated on the amount of time we are invoiced for by our bid writing specialist. As the service has become more established, we have seen more established and experienced businesses coming forward for support. This has meant that we are spending less time of their applications prior to submission as they typically require less support. The number of grant applications submitted exceeds the target, which means we are seeing a reduction in the time spent with each business but an increase in the outputs.

Outcomes – i.e. successful applications – are subject to a range of factors, but we have seen an overall increase in the number of applications being made to Innovate UK for funding across Dorset since the service was introduced, going from 40 in 2017/18 (the year prior to the service being introduced) to 68 in 2020/2, which is a 46% increase. The level of customer satisfaction is being actively followed up, to ensure the target is met.

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

Dorset Gateway’s Business Relationship Officer (Trade and Investment) has been working alongside the Department for International Trade (DIT) to connect local businesses with Export Academy and SME Internationalisation Fund. We have no contractual obligations regarding the delivery of this project.

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. 30 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>

**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>.

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**E) DORSET INNOVATION PARK**

The Memorandum of Understanding between Dorset LEP and Dorset Council is in the last stages of finalisation.

The Investment Plan has been shared between Dorset Council, Dorset LEP and Ministry of Defence (MoD) with the clarity on measurable criteria and the direction for the Enterprise Zone. A plan in terms of resources and implementation will need to be put in place as the next stage.

All stakeholders are working well together as a community in terms of the future plan, skills and the potential academic partnership into the region. Mechanisms have been put in place to aid information sharing and collaboration, such as shared progress and update activity documents. The Committee is advancing with progress and this is a good news story in our region.

There are several strands of activity that are taking place under the academic engagement between MoD, Dorset LEP, Arts University Bournemouth, Bournemouth University, Universities of the South West and the Defence Academic Enterprise.

Phase 1 of the BattleLab is complete. Phase 2 will be operational by February 2022 with a launch event expected to take place late February.

**F) CAREERS AND ENTERPRISE COMPANY (CEC) – CAREERS HUB**

Dorset LEP receives funding from the CEC linked to delivery targets. An overview of performance to date is provided below.

Dorset Careers Hub has been busy inducting and training new team members and planning for the year ahead. We are continuing to develop our strategy in line with the CEC's 7 key objectives:

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| --- |
| 1. Amplifying technical and vocational routes |
| 2. A self-improving system - deliver Gatsby Benchmarks and Create Impact |
| 3. Effective transitions |
| 4. Removing barriers - Focus on SEND & SEMH and the Disadvantaged |
| 5. Building leaders for the system - Elevating the role of the Careers Leader |
| 6. Careers education as part of economic recovery |
| 7. Employers build long term sustainable, mutually beneficial partnerships with schools and colleges |

With heightened activity at government level, including the Skills Bill, Industrial Strategy, Plan for Growth and Education Select Committee, comes a remit from the Careers & Enterprise Company to consider and measure impact in everything we do.

We consistently support our 75 schools and colleges in the network and after a difficult summer term everyone came back fighting and determined to make up for lost time, and so did we. There has been a lot of physical activity with school's visits, careers events and talks, but with the new wave of Covid sweeping through the country and pupil numbers fluctuating, this has been difficult to achieve, and plans are having to change by the day.

We have 7 Enterprise Adviser vacancies, 3 within SEND or AP schools, and 2 additional Middle School vacancies and we are working on a targeted campaign taking geographical location into consideration, looking at alumni networks and have really ramped-up our marketing to attract the right people.

We have allocated significant time to our social media campaign and are already seeing high activity, new followers and impressive engagement levels. Enquiries for business support through our website has greatly increased and is resulting in meetings to discuss collaboration and support in schools. A new website is now being designed and developed, which we hope will go live in time for the new year.

Gatsby benchmarks 1,3, 5 & 8 are more challenging than the others to achieve this year. A key issue facing schools currently, as previously mentioned, is the shortage of Level 6 Careers Guidance practitioners, and we are addressing this issue by looking at workarounds and whether sharing resources among school communities is an option.

With a big push at national, local and Hub level on effective transitions and removing barriers, we are currently building our database of disability confident employers, counsellors and careers coaches across Dorset and contacting people on regular basis. We hope to have an uplift in interest and influx of support in the coming months, for all students.

We are pushing to increase work experience offers and will look to virtual work experience again, as well as reaching out to parents & carers for quick wins on face-to-face experiences. We are looking to develop a work experience toolkit for schools, parents and companies to facilitate the journey for all involved. We are currently working with two employers, National Trust and RSPB, on work experience for disadvantaged young people in cohorts from 2 schools.

**Other Skills Updates**

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

* **SAP Programme –** as anticipated, the Department for Education 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[The Skills Bootcamp](https://skillslaunchpad.org.uk/skills/skills-launch-digital-and-technical-bootcamps/) 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.
* **LMI training** – we have continued to use our LMI in creative collaborations with stakeholders – working with BU’s careers team, as part of their skills masterclasses we offer a session highlighting local opportunities, skills gaps and future projections to increase awareness and retention among BU students; We are also working with Bournemouth and Poole College to develop an LMI session as part of their management away day to help understand the employer demand better while deep diving into the staffing and skills needs of healthcare as our largest employment sector.
* **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 stats available to confirm numbers receiving training, personal guidance and direction to employment. Restart providers and 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 Brokerage –** embedded within Dorset Gateway, the skills brokerage has been delivering business support around apprenticeships, traineeships and kickstart schemes as well as BEIS funded programmes’ Peer Networks and Help to Grow - Business. This key service brings together the business resilience and growth work with skills provision.
* **Skills Accelerator bid** – working with Bournemouth and Poole and Weymouth colleges, we have submitted a bid to the DfE for support to provide a digital programme for business leaders. This has been awarded and the funds will drive forward the course content, and deliver 2 modules to enable business to better understand the benefits of a 5G connection to grow and innovate their business.
* **Innovation Skills Hub in Boscombe** – BCP have held a week long pilot of the skills hub in Boscombe with many events and showcasing the virtual skills platform. There were over 300 visitors over the week, and the council are now taking forward the full business case to cabinet. This work is in partnership with education providers, Dorset LEP and Dorset Growth hub.
* **Skills Commission** – 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.
* **Community Renewal Fund** – Dorset Council have been successful with a bid to the CRF for £83k to support Young Enterprise programme in Dorset Schools, building innovation and enterprise skills and awareness.

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**Skills**

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