



# **DORSET**

Local Enterprise Partnership

**Dorset LEP**

**Skills Advisory Panel**

**Terms of Reference**

**July 2019**

## **1. Purpose**

- 1.1. The purpose of the Dorset LEP Skills Advisory Panel is to bring together local employers to identify, understand and address key skills and labour market challenges and opportunities. The Skills Advisory Panel will work with the Dorset Skills Board to ensure that the Dorset LEP area has the future skills and workforce needed to support economic growth and that residents of the area have the skills they need to meet their full employment potential.

## **2. Role**

- 2.1. Working in conjunction with the Dorset Skills Board the Skills Advisory Panel will oversee the development of robust, up to date skills and labour market intelligence for Dorset.
- 2.2. In collaboration with the Dorset Skills Board and other partners the Skills Advisory Panel is responsible for the development the Dorset Skills Strategy for the Dorset LEP area, setting the skills development agenda and providing direction for strategic investment decisions.
- 2.3. The Skills Advisory Panel will raise the profile of skills and training in Dorset, promoting the importance of investment in skills and training to the business sector.
- 2.4. The Skills Advisory Panel has the ability when required to create time limited working groups to investigate specific topics to report to report back to the Dorset Board.
- 2.5. All business if the Skills Advisory Panel will be conducted in accordance with the Nolan Principles of Public Life.

## **3. Status**

- 3.1. The Skills Advisory Panel is an independent voluntary partnership, without formal legal status. It conducts its activities in the interest of the area it serves and secures its long-term objectives without giving undue favour to any organisation or panel member.

## **4. Objectives**

- 4.1. Oversee development of the skills and labour market intelligence for Dorset and the development of the Dorset skills analysis.
- 4.2. Develop and maintain a sophisticated understanding of skills and labour market requirements and provision in the Dorset LEP area over the medium to long term.
- 4.3. Identify key challenges and opportunities within the local skills and labour market, and work with the Skills Board and partner organisations to address these challenges and maximise opportunities.
- 4.4. Build upon the high quality evidence base and skills analysis and work with the Dorset Skills Board and partner organisations to develop a Skills Strategy for Dorset to support economic growth and open up opportunities for residents to fulfil their employment potential.

- 4.5. Working closely with the Skills Board and partner organisations to ensure that local skills and labour market needs are met and that all residents have access and opportunity to acquire the skills and training they need to participate fully in employment.
- 4.6. Monitor the performance of key delivery programmes, identifying best practice, lessons learnt and opportunities for enhancement, reporting back to the LEP Board to help inform strategy development and investment decisions.
- 4.7. Champion the importance of skills and training in Dorset; engaging and supporting local employers to invest in skills and training, working with partner organisations to promote opportunities for all forms of training, using up to date skills and labour market evidence to support the delivery of careers advice across Dorset.
- 4.8. Act as ambassadors for skills and training within the business community, sharing best practice and support.

## **5. Panel membership**

- 5.1. The Skills Advisory Panel will consist of up to 15 members, the focus of this membership will be business led, with representation from a range of employers that reflect local business and employment sectors, including representation from small and medium sized business. The Skills Advisory Panel will also include representatives from the voluntary sector and the two local authorities. Local authority representation will be from officers or members with responsibility for the economy.
- 5.2. Invitation will be extended to other organisations to attend from time to time, including;
  - 5.2.1. JobCentre Plus
  - 5.2.2. Education and Skills Funding Agency
  - 5.2.3. Cities & Local Growth Unit
- 5.3. Members will have sufficient seniority to be able to make a strategic contribution and influence the unlocking of resources in their respective organisations.
- 5.4. Panel members serve in a personal capacity (with the exception of local authority members) and will act in the interests of the Skills Advisory Panel
- 5.5. The role of business sector members is to represent the views and interest of private and community/voluntary sector businesses, with reference to particular sectors, business size and geographic area, whilst always ensuring that decisions are taken in the best interests of Dorset's business community as a whole.
- 5.6. The role of local authority members is to represent their constituents, whilst acting in the interests of Dorset as a whole.

5.7. The process for selecting representatives shall be determined by an open recruitment and selection process.

5.8. The terms of office for Panel members will stand as follows:

| <b>Member category</b>       | <b>Term of office</b> | <b>Replacement if vacancy arises</b> |
|------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Business & voluntary sectors | Two years             | Open recruitment                     |
| Eg. Public Sector            | Two years             | By succeeding manager                |

5.9. Dorset LEP is committed to strengthening diversity in its governance groups by increasing the proportion of women and under-represented minorities.

## **6. Chair**

6.1. The Dorset Skills Board chair will assume responsible as Chair of the Skills Advisory Panel. A Deputy Chair will be elected by the Skills Advisory Panel from among the business sector members. Both positions will be subject to annual renewal.

6.2. Duties of the Chair will include:

6.2.1. Leading the smooth and effective operation of the Panel;

6.2.2. To ensure the Secretariat is operating effectively and within its mandate, that budgets are appropriately applied and that proper policies and processes are in place and observed;

6.2.3. To ensure timely advice and reporting to the Dorset LEP Board relating to the work of the Panel

6.2.4. To ensure effective liaison with all constituents of the Dorset LEP and government, and to undertake activity as required according to the business plan or emerging strategies and needs.

6.3. Dorset LEP will provide the administrative function for the panel.

## **7. Representation and attendance**

7.1. Panel members (or approved deputies) are expected to attend not less than 75% of meetings over a twelve month period. If this attendance rate is not achieved by any member, the Panel is entitled to review their membership and ask for an explanation before taking further action. A 75% majority is required to rescind the membership of any individual.

## **8. Decisions**

8.1. The Panel shall operate on the basis of consensus.

- 8.2. In the event that a consensus cannot be achieved on a matter requiring decision, that decision shall be taken by vote and carried if it is supported by over 50% of those present
- 8.3. In the event of a tied decision, the Chair of the meeting will cast the deciding vote.
- 8.4. There should be a quorum of eight, and there must always be a majority of business sector members for a meeting to be quorate.
- 8.5. If a decision needs to be made outside of the meeting, decision can be sought via Written Procedure. In such cases, the Secretariat shall write to each Panel member requesting agreement to a specified course of action. Panel members shall be given no fewer than five working days to respond to the Secretariat.
- 8.6. For a decision to be taken by Written Procedure, the number of members participating and the composition of those members must be as required for a quorate meeting. Over 50% of members responding to the request must indicate agreement to the proposal.
- 8.7. All decisions made by Written Procedure shall be ratified at the next scheduled meeting.

## **9. Meetings and papers**

- 9.1. Panel meetings shall be held on 8 to 12 week basis with a minimum of four meetings per annum. A calendar of future meetings will be set for a year at a time although the minimum notice required for a meeting is two weeks, to ensure that all members are afforded the opportunity to attend.
- 9.2. The agenda and papers for meetings shall be approved by the Chair and issued at least 5 working days in advance of the meeting by the Secretariat.
- 9.3. Meeting minutes shall be approved in draft form by the Chair and disseminated to members no later than ten working days following the meeting. Minutes shall remain in draft until approval by the Panel at the next meeting.
- 9.4. Minutes shall be made publicly available via website except for minutes which are not suitable for release into the public domain, for example due to them containing personal information about individuals or commercially sensitive data. Any minutes which are not released into the public domain will be stored confidentially by the Secretariat.

## **10. Conflicts of interest**

- 10.1. The Panel shall ensure that all conflicts of interest are fully disclosed.
- 10.2. The Secretariat shall maintain a Register of Members' Interests. This shall include all company directorships, trusteeships, elected offices, remunerated posts and other relevant interests. The Register of Members' Interests shall be made available to any interested party at any time. Members shall supply information to the Secretariat for inclusion in the register, or a nil return, on

joining the Panel, in response to any request for an update and on becoming aware of any new interest. The Secretariat will circulate a request for information about interests annually.

10.3. Should a member's interests change, s/he shall inform the Secretariat at the earliest opportunity.

10.4. Should an issue be discussed by the Panel which presents a conflict of interest to a member, the member shall declare the conflict of interest, regardless of whether s/he has previously declared the interest in the Register of Members' Interests. Such declarations shall be formally recorded.

10.5. Members shall not vote or participate in discussions on any issues on which they have registered an interest.

## **11. Reporting to the Dorset LEP Board**

11.1. The Panel shall be fully accountable to the Dorset LEP Board and shall have Dorset LEP board member representation.

11.2. The Panel will provide a regular report to the Dorset LEP Board in written format as agreed with the Dorset LEP Board.

11.3. The Panel will provide timely advice to the Dorset LEP Board, bringing to its attention matters of importance or responding to its requests.

11.4. All papers to be considered by the Dorset LEP Board must be provided at least 7 days in advance of the Dorset LEP Board meeting.