

## Dorset LEP Skills Advisory Panel

### Requirement and proposed approach:

The overall objective of this work is to develop a skills and employment evidence base and analytical framework which will help the Dorset Skills Advisory Panel more clearly understand the current skills landscape from a supply and demand perspective, and to indicate where provision needs to alter to meet current and future demand from employers. This will need to have a geographical focus, with priorities for provision differing across the DLEP area to reflect differing needs.

In terms of **specific deliverables**, this focuses on three key outputs:

1) To complete an initial analysis of the skills and employment evidence – including some detail around emerging priorities – by the end of September. The assumption is that this will feed into, and be presented, at a Skills Advisory Panel meeting scheduled at that time. The expectation is that this initial analysis would be further developed over the remainder of the contract period. In that sense, this task can be split into two periods:

- i. Initial analysis and identification of some emerging findings – testing with the SAP members – September 2019
- ii. Subsequent further development and refinement of the skills and employment evidence base – period through to end of March 2020

2) To produce an analytical framework which the Dorset SAP will use as an ongoing resource to understand how local providers should determine the shape of their provision. The contractor will work with the SAP (and its individual members) to ensure that it is content it represents a robust, clear and easy to use framework for the group and all partners to utilise beyond the life of this contract.

3) To develop an evaluation framework which will help the SAP understand whether the priorities which have been acted on are having a positive impact on the labour market. The framework should specifically relate to the activities. For example, local employer feedback on whether local provision is now better suiting need, evidence of demand for courses, potentially some tracking of individual outcomes etc. The aim of the framework should be to better understand whether the fundamental objective of the SAP – to assess and change provision to better meet current and future demand (employers and individuals) – is being achieved.

It is important that the evaluation framework is not too aspirational in its focus, it needs to be realistic about whether the impact of changing skills provision can be detected in the ‘noise’ of overall economic conditions/performance. It will also be important to note that the impact of skills is often lagged, the positive impact (both from an employer and individuals’ perspective) may not be seen for several years.

Therefore, the framework should also be constructed so that any short-term outcomes can be captured – indicating that the new landscape is better meeting requirements. It will also be important that the SAP and its members have ‘bought into’ the evaluation framework. That they see value in being involved in future evaluation activity, and that they themselves are not being evaluated. This ‘buy in’ will be important in terms of implementing the framework over the longer-term.

The work needs to be influenced by the emphasis contained in the Government’s Skills Advisory Panel analytical toolkit (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/skills-advisory-panels-23-OF-36-analytical-toolkit>). The toolkit contains useful guidance as to how the work should be undertaken,

associated with a compendium on skills and labour market data. The toolkit sets out the quality standards expected with an overall framework.

A consideration will be given to policy, local and national, and its impact and influence on the local skills agenda, which form an important element of the Skills Analysis.