

DORSET SKILLS BOARD –MEETING MINUTES
MONDAY 10th JUNE – 14:00 – 16:00 - VIRTUAL MEETING HELD ON TEAMS
Attendees:

Nicola Newman, Chair (NN)
 Adrian Gunner, SWRAC (AG)
 Amy Walton, BCP Council (AW)
 David Matthews, Upton Beach (DM)
 Eleanor Parson, NHS Dorset (EP)
 Hugh Joseph, Engineering Sector (HJ)
 Joanna Gale, Seetec Plus (JG)
 Jim Andrews, Bournemouth University (JA)
 Jon Bird, Dorset Council (JB)
 Karen Taylor, DWP (KT)
 Lesley Haig, AECC (LH)
 Lesley Spain, Head of Skills and Learning, BCP Council (LS)
 Penny Syddall, Dorset Council (PSy)
 Phil Sayles, Bournemouth and Poole College (PS)
 Rod Davis, Dorset and Somerset Training Provider Network (RD)
 Rebecca Davies, Dorset LEP (RD (LEP))
 Clare Fleming, Dorset LEP (CF)

Apologies:

Julia Howe, Weymouth College

Item	Notes and Decisions	Action
1.	<p>Welcome from the Chair.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apologies were received from Julia Howe • Quick round of introductions from all attendees. • No declarations of interest were received. • Minutes of the previous meeting were agreed and signed off. <p>RD updated board on the Business Skills Directory which is now available on the DSTPN website. RD thanked everyone for their support and the Chair reiterated these thanks.</p>	
2.	<p>Spotlight for discussion – education changes and potential impact</p> <p>RD(LEP) shared a presentation (attached) and thoughts about the local skills and funding challenges landscape. Supported by data from Emma Buckman who is working with Dorset LEP on an evidence base, economic strategy and data analysis, the presentation covered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Significant cuts in funding to the local education and skills sector • Organisational change • Review of population changes and drivers • Local and national government changes <p>RD(LEP) welcomed responses and thoughts.</p> <p>KT: Suggested a mapping exercise to see the picture across the area and identify where there is duplication or pinch points.</p> <p>RD: Amplified RD(LEP)'s comments around the minimal rise in provider funding and acknowledged increased pressure from compliance – something they have raised with the DfE. Noted that many providers 'jump in' to Dorset. There can be benefits to this but consistency and planning becomes difficult.</p> <p>AG: Noted that adult education funding has been decimated and there is a need to think about adults looking for foundation, functional qualifications to</p>	

	<p>reskill. AG noted that BCP are embarking on the safety valve project with the DfE which is likely to limit the amount of funding available for schools and colleges.</p> <p>PS: Identified that there are national factors and local factors which contribute to the challenging circumstances with no anticipation of resources changing. We have to recognise the good providers and increase collaboration and connectivity - to champion working together for the Dorset area and create a vision for when / if priorities change.</p> <p>NN summarised the responses as the group understanding and maximising what we've got.</p>	
2.	<p>LSIP Progress Report - RD in Chair</p> <p>Acknowledging that everyone had been sent the draft report, RD invited comments and thoughts from the group.</p> <p>NN presented slides (attached) giving context and background to the report. NN noted that the DSB owns the report and that publication is currently stalled due to the calling of the general election.</p> <p>JB: Suggested that the report should reflect the benefits of being joined up and expressed that he is broadly happy with the report and all the LSIP does but suggested there could be less focus on Dorset Chamber in the report.</p> <p>KT: Asked where we are reflecting the skills agenda beyond 16-19.</p> <p>LS: Noted the activity funded by UKSPF and Multiply over the last 2 ½ years that perhaps people aren't aware of. LS commented that the impact of 'flatlined' funding can only result in a contraction of programmes.</p> <p>PS: Stated that B&P College's perspective is that the LSIP and LSIF are very much about adult learning and adding to what is prescribed at 16-18, e.g. green skills for employees, skills boot camps, apprenticeships and SWAP.</p> <p>RD: Reflected a sense that there is not enough focus on young learners in the LSIP process.</p> <p>LH: Described that she is looking for optimising what the DSB returns as a collaborative and noted that there is not much in the report about Level 6. Observing that the universities are not part of the Dorset Skills Strategic Communications Partnership, LH asked how they could contribute and input more to that. LH suggested that the place based partnership working together to break down the barriers of different sectors could be reflected more in the report.</p> <p>PS: Noted that the way that the LSIP has been approached over the last 2 years has exceeded expectations and there's been real care and attention to describing 'our skills world', helpfully pulling out issues in the sector.</p> <p>KT: Requested references to Job Centre Plus be changed to DWP. Suggested the report could give examples of the sector based work academies, skills boot camps and other delivery models. RD: Noted that skills boot camps are in the report and an important part of the agenda in stage 2.</p> <p>As Chair, RD thanked the group for their comments. He raised the point that the awareness of the non-college providers in the group is high, but engagement is</p>	

	<p>relatively low and he and NN are in discussion about how to address that.</p> <p>EP: Asked if there is an opportunity for the employer lens in the report noting that the opportunity and influence that the collective workforce of the NHS, social care and the two councils have is significant.</p> <p>NN: Showed appreciation for the comments and the willingness to be partners in the process and own the output.</p> <p>NN: Outlined next steps of redrafting and recirculating the report. AW offered to share information about what BCP has been doing to see where it can be included in the report.</p> <p>EP: Confirmed she is happy to contribute a piece reflecting the employer piece for Dorset.</p> <p>NN: Noted that they are also starting to work on something that is much more employer friendly.</p> <p>RD: Thanked Nicola and the team and recognised the great approach across the county. RD summarised some of the themes of cost cutting, employers wanting essential skills, and leadership and management skills and that higher level, degree work and adult skills elements need to be reflected along with the lack of adult education budget and a flavour of the different contributions.</p>	<p>AW: Share BCP information with NN</p> <p>NN: Report to be recirculated after updates</p>
4.	<p>Partner lightning updates – NN in Chair</p> <p>KT: Restricted by pre-election period, but business as usual.</p> <p>EP: The NHS long term workforce plan clearly articulates the need to recruit, retain and train the workforce given the challenging financial position in Dorset. EP noted the Breaking Barriers Innovations coastal towns and communities work being led by Lord Patel. The NHS wants to run a session about placements in Q2 bringing partners together.</p> <p>DM: The Careers Hub is delivering a fantastic programme this year but is also in a planning phase for next year. Conditions are right for supporting students to step into technical and apprenticeship pathways, but employer engagement is key.</p> <p>LH: AECC are anticipating a name change to Health Sciences University from July. Also, Princess Anne has agreed to be Chancellor and AECC will be launching their London campus from 1st August. They are keen to raise the visibility of Dorset and build strong collaborative working.</p> <p>JA: Outlined ongoing challenges in the higher education sector with budget reductions, industrial disputes across the sector and the continued decline of international students. BU is looking at other areas of development including transnational delivery and some programmes going online, some pausing. They do have new post graduate programmes coming on board. They have had a series of regulatory visits. BU is coming to the end of their 2025 strategy and a new chancellor is starting in September.</p> <p>PS: Outlined great collaboration with the AECC, BU and AUB to get the right programmes across the area. They have some curricular changes e.g. T levels coming through, introducing SWAPs and looking at the boot camp agenda. They have 5 capital projects over the summer and have a focus on culture and leadership; updating electronic systems; their logo, branding and website. They</p>	<p>EP to share Dorset More & Different</p>

	<p>have formulated their strategy to 2030 which launches on 26th June and are also opening the University Centre Poole.</p> <p>PSy: UKSPF: They have reopened embedded digital champion training. They are planning a digital leadership course for businesses to upskill and are working with health colleagues to write digital inclusion into the ICS strategy, creating a single approach and looking to prevent increased health inequalities from the roll out of digital health technologies. Looking ahead to Coding Day this year where businesses have the chance to help by going in to a local school.</p> <p>LS: 24/25 is the last year of Multiply (finally getting traction and awareness but will end in March '25) and the only year of UKSPF. BCP Skill Up Dorset (UKSPF) has the first numbers starting. They have capital funding for a project at Kings Park Leisure and Learning Centre to increase provision and visitors to the building who will benefit from signposting to adult education provision.</p> <p>AW: Noted collaboration work they are doing with BU – working on delivering a masters degree in engineering apprenticeships, and with B&P College - a manufacturing apprenticeship based on the Sunseeker model. They are driving forward skills bootcamps and working with their early years workforce team and DSTPN to develop an early years skills bootcamp. Also looking to launch a carbon literacy course.</p> <p>JB: Restricted by pre-election period but business as usual.</p> <p>RD: Update on the DSTPN structure – with Richard Jenkins now on board as Operations Director. With £3m to spend by the end of March, they are keen to hear from businesses about what their delivery offer is. Strategically, they are working closely with AELP and have a DFE meeting on 11th July.</p> <p>RD noted that the Weymouth College and Kingston Maurwood merger is proceeding at pace.</p> <p>RD(LEP): Reported on the Careers Hub programme of events including the first Teachers Encounters session at AFC Bournemouth and another SEND Forum on July 11th with a focus on how to help young people in to work. Updated the meeting on the future of the LEP. The Digital Skills Hub won a Local Partner of the Year Award and have celebrated the end of the first Business Accelerator cohort. They have a full delivery schedule in the coming months.</p>	
5.	<p>Labour Market Insights</p> <p>RD(LEP) presented the most recent Labour Market Insights.</p> <p>AW: Noted the The National Careers Service who provide lots of information on their website around CV writing based on research.</p>	
6.	<p>AOB - None</p> <p>NN thanked RD(LEP) noting that her knowledge and experience is invaluable.</p> <p>NN suggested that the next meeting is in the summer to keep up momentum and pick up after the general election.</p>	

Next meeting: 15th August on Teams (TBC)