

**DORSET SKILLS BOARD – DRAFT MEETING MINUTES**
**MONDAY 13<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER – 14:00 – 16:00**
**VIRTUAL MEETING HELD ON TEAMS**
**Attendees:**

Nicola Newman, Chair (NN)  
 Adrian Trevett, BCP Council (AT)  
 David Matthews, Upton Beach (DM)  
 Lesley Spain, Head of Skills and Learning, BCP Council (LS)  
 Hugh Joseph, ABS Engineering (HJ)  
 Jim Andrews, Bournemouth University (JA)  
 Jon Bird, Dorset Council (JB)  
 Mike Wood – attending in place of Julia Howe, Weymouth College (MW)  
 Penny Syddall, Dorset Council (PS)  
 Antony Carr – attending in place of Phil Sayles, Bournemouth and Poole College (AC)  
 Rod Davis, Dorset and Somerset Training Provider Network (RD)  
 Rebecca Davies, Dorset LEP (RD (LEP))  
 Clare Fleming, Dorset LEP

**Absences:**

Adrian Gunner, Principal, SWRAC  
 Lesley Haig, AECC  
 Karen Taylor, DWP

Item	Notes and Decisions	Action
1.	<p><b>Welcome</b> from the Chair.</p> <p><b>Apologies</b> were received from:            Tim Ford, Luke Rake, Julia Howe, Richard Renaut, Phil Sayles</p> <p>Brief introductions from each member.</p>	
2.	<p><b>Discussion with Evonne Pemberton, Vizst Technology (EP)</b></p> <p>EP introduced herself and Vizst - an enterprise led, fast growing IT support and services business with offices in Poole and Newbury and remote workers.</p> <p>Vizst's recruitment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• takes an organic approach, responding to immediate needs</li> <li>• uses job boards, recommendations, and internal recruitment rather than external agencies</li> <li>• is time consuming – particularly as people don't showcase their skills effectively</li> <li>• is both local and nationwide.</li> </ul> <p>EP would like clearer direction of what support they can get from FE &amp; HE colleges. There is a will to engage and work with providers.</p> <p>In response to questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NN noted that EP's response on levy funding gave a perspective on how quick moving the business is.</li> <li>• EP noted they use QA as a training provider to find apprentices.</li> <li>• They source training from their vendors who offer free training. They are looking to address a training need in leadership and management skills.</li> <li>• For data protection training they use an online platform and internal training.</li> <li>• They have 2 apprentices who joined this year (on the service desk). Most others in the workforce (c. 50 employees) have 5+ years' experience.</li> </ul> <p>EP noted a reticence in the public sector to award a contract to a provider</p>	

	<p>outside of the organisation's area. This is a risk to businesses in Dorset. NN reiterated her thanks to EP for an interesting session.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RD posted a <a href="#">link</a> to a directory of providers and said they could provide support to access providers.</li> <li>• LS noted that it would be helpful to pool the providers information and training offer into a short directory. RD noted this was being looked at for this year's version of the publication.</li> <li>• NN noted that they will be asking more people to come and speak at the meetings – the next one will be on health. JA requested that we seek a workforce profile before they come.</li> <li>• RD (LEP) noted that the fast, reactive recruitment and retention way of working is not unusual.</li> <li>• DM noted the importance of SEO on Google.</li> </ul>	
3.	<p><b>Skills Board Terms of Reference, new membership, and register of interests</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RD (LEP) shared the purpose and objectives from the Terms of Reference</li> <li>• RD (LEP) welcomed Penny Syddall to the committee.</li> <li>• Noted that invitations have been made to a SEND representative and a school working on T levels.</li> <li>• NN noted that the committee still needs to appoint a Deputy Chair.</li> </ul>	
4.	<p><b>Strategic delivery update</b></p> <p><b>Higher Education – Jim Andrews</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interesting and challenging times financially for the HE sector.</li> <li>• Reviewing strategic plan (ends in 2025).</li> <li>• Sees this as a good opportunity to engage.</li> </ul> <p><b>Skills Boot Camps – Rod Davies</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presentation attached</li> </ul> <p>NN recognised that the money is there – we need to grasp the opportunity and cascade the message more.</p> <p>LS proposed pulling together a survey of the common digital skills that are needed e.g., AI.</p> <p><b>Skills and Learning – Lesley Spain</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• UK Shared Prosperity Fund (Multiply Programme) has been opened up to provision for people with Level 2 maths.</li> <li>• Current BCP Council UKSPF People and Skills tender is now live <a href="#">here</a> – closing date is 27th November. 3 Lots tendered E34, E36, E39.</li> <li>• Virtual Skills Platform – funded from BCP Council's Town's Fund and focussed on Boscombe. A combined skills profiling, course, and job search platform. Populating the platform with data is proving challenging, partly due to the way Providers currently record competencies and skills against courses. UK government looking at a framework similar to the EU version.</li> </ul> <p><b>Digital Skills Partnership – Penny Syddall</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vibrant group, established for 2 years and supported by Dorset Council.</li> <li>• Examples of work given: 5,000 children taking part in a coding day; Women in Tech Dorset; cyber forum channelling information on cyber security to businesses.</li> <li>• Have done a mapping and gapping exercise.</li> <li>• A strong body with an understanding of digital skills, what Dorset needs and what can be provided.</li> </ul>	

	<p><b>Local Authorities</b></p> <p><b>BCP - Adrian Trevett</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shared Prosperity Fund – 80 grants given to date, circa £240k of grant funding matched with £440k of private sector funding, creating / safeguarding 330 jobs.</li> <li>• Start-up initiative started with BU / AUB and will extend to AECC early in the new year.</li> <li>• October event bringing business and skills providers together – resulting in a pledge and capturing and analysis of data. Next event at BPC will focus on T levels, Employer Advisory Boards, and fast track skills programmes.</li> </ul> <p><b>Dorset - Jon Bird</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dorset has “meanwhile” provision of business support bridging the gap between legacy business support and main strand of SPF-funded support being tendered.</li> <li>• Noted a consistent issue of skills shortages, a demand for more apprentices, more training, and clustering to deliver.</li> </ul> <p><b>DWP</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NN noted they have the flexibility and the budget to help people get into work</li> <li>• RD (LEP) noted there is a contract with Seetec Plus to help economically inactive people into work.</li> </ul> <p>NN thanked everyone for their updates.</p>	
5.	<p><b>Local Skills Improvement Plan update</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NN presentation attached.</li> </ul> <p>Local Skills Improvement Fund - Antony Carr</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dorset application for £2.5m was successful. They have 4 projects:           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sustainable construction at BPC.</li> <li>• Modern methods of construction at Weymouth.</li> <li>• Encouraging people to come out of industry and teach.</li> <li>• Reaching out to harder to reach parts of the workforce – e.g., SEND.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>AC noted that there is a sharing of curriculum – Weymouth is going to train the trainers at BPC.</p>	
6.	<p><b>Labour Market Information and data update</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RD (LEP) presentation attached.</li> </ul> <p>Discussion around predictions of manufacturing jobs reducing, given the defence and marine industry of Dorset.</p>	
7.	<p><b>AOB</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• RD (LEP): Update on Digital Skills Hub in Boscombe – moving to 4 days of delivery and working with BU on a research piece ensuring the delivery is targeted.</li> <li>• RD: DfE's Expert Provider Panel is focussing on the issues SMEs have with the apprenticeship process.</li> <li>• NN/AC noted the HE injection fund.</li> </ul>	

**Next meeting: 11 March 2024 (Teams)**