

MINUTES

DORSET LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP SKILLS ADVISORY PANEL AND BOARD

15 March 2021, 2 pm – 3.30 pm
Virtual meeting

Board Attendees:

- Emma Hunt, AUB, Chair (EH)
- Adrian Trevett, Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole Council (AT)
- David Matthews, Upton Beach Consulting (DM)
- David Walsh, Dorset Council (DW)
- Diane Grannell, Bournemouth and Poole College (DG)
- Jim Andrews, Bournemouth University (JA)
- Julia Howe, Weymouth College (JH)
- Luke Rake, Kingston Maurward College (LR)
- Lesley Haig –Vice-Chancellor AECC (LH)
- Lesley Spain, Skills and Adult Community Education (LS)
- Nicola Newman, Ansbury Guidance (NN)
- Nigel Evans, Weymouth College (NE)
- Richard Renaut, University Hospitals Dorset NHS Foundation Trust (RR)
- Rod Davis, Dorset and Somerset Training Providers (RoD)
- Steph Simpson, Department for Work and Pensions (SS)
- Tim Ford, Independent Director (TF)
- Zannah Chisholm , Pavilion Dance South West (ZC)

Also Present:

- Rebecca Davies, DLEP Head Of Enterprise, Skills And Industry (RD)
- Mira Koseva, DLEP Skills Analyst (MK)

Apologies:

- Luke Rake, Kingston Maurward College (LR)
- Stephen Williams, DLEP Careers Hub Lead (SW)
- Hugh Joseph, Air Bearing Solutions (HJ)

Item	Welcome, introductions and apologies	Action
1	The Chair opened the meeting extending special welcome to the newly appointed members of the SAP Board Richard Renaut and Tim Ford who offered brief introductions. Richard is the Chief of Strategy and Transformation at University Hospitals Dorset and Tim is a Senior Independent Director and involved in tertiary education. The new representative of the Department of Work and Pensions Steph Simpson was also in attendance on behalf of the DWP Integrated District Operations in Dorset, New Forest and Isle of Wight.	
2	Minutes, Actions and Matters Arising	
	The Chair ensured the follow up actions from the previous meeting held on 18 January were completed and meeting minutes were agreed as an accurate reflection of the proceedings. There were no matters arising.	MK: Minutes to be published

3	Recovery	
3.1	<p>Current Skills Activities Update The Chair noted a paper update on skills activities has been distributed with the meeting papers and invited RD for brief updates on the key initiatives included within the paper.</p> <p>RD updated the committee on a range of recovery initiatives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skills Boot Camps – Dorset LEP successfully bid to offer skills bootcamps in partnership with Heart of the SW LEP. Funded by the DfE and designed to enable a change of skill set, bootcamps are available in a range of digital and technical skills, some of them underway and some commencing in April. • Mid-life MOT – DLEP were also successful in their bid to DWP for funds to support an innovative mid-life MOT for employees aged 50+. The funding is aimed to support workers assess their financial, health and skills status and ensure they achieve greater quality of work but also greater health and prosperity when they enter retirement. The project is live, with a week of promotion in April. • LMI training for Dorset Job Centres and Work Coaches – we have continued to deliver training for the job centres in Dorset, and the 100 Dorset work coaches employed to support those who are looking for work. Our training enables work coaches to identify required skills sets, employers and future opportunities. • Restart Programme –DLEP have been supporting £2.9bn DWP Restart programme tender process to ensure the strategic needs of Dorset are embedded with the provision. The Restart programme will help those who have been out of work for 1yr+. • An Hour to skill – In January we promoted the DfE initiative to encourage everyone to dedicate an hour a week to learning. This programme continues to offer free learning opportunities. • Bidding support – we have supported the Health Foundation bid for innovation in healthcare, led by University Hospitals Dorset, and a bid to the Health Alliance relating to Health Economies and support for areas of deprivation (CCG/DC lead). • T level support – Ferndown Upper School will offer Dorset's first T level qualification in Sept 2022, and we are supporting the school as they move to this target date. • Apprenticeship mythbusting – we have secured funding from the CEC to complete a programme of work to increase the number of apprenticeships offered in Dorset and support decision making in schools around apprenticeships in collaboration with Dorset Gateway. 	RD to circulate an update to training providers
3.2	<p>Careers Hub The Dorset Careers Hub is half-way through the academic year. The challenging pandemic operating context has affected schools in their ability to deliver projects and achieve impact. Despite this, the Hub has made good progress in many areas with all six main projects on track:</p>	

Project	Activities	
Programme Planning	Intensive support and CPD provided to new schools, and Benchmark scores are improving.	
Activation Fund	33 school bids funded, to kick start new school careers activities.	
Inclusive Careers	Steering group formed, comprising businesses, parent groups, DWP, FE colleges, special school and learning centres.	
Virtual Work Experience	Pilot underway, and summer programme offering placements to 2,000 students on track.	
Online Careers & Apprenticeships Show	Major event with 60 companies, 7 universities, 15 colleges and thousands of students under development.	
LMI Dissemination	CPD session delivered to Careers Leaders across county.	
3.3	<p>Labour Market Information (LMI) Latest Dorset LMI insights and key industry dashboards were produced and published on the Dorset Skills Research page, reflecting on the labour market developments over the first months of 2021. A new Apprenticeship finder dashboard has been developed in collaboration with the Dorset and Somerset Training Providers Network.</p>	
3.4	<p>DWP update SS gave an update on the DWP work in Dorset.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kickstart Scheme <p>Aimed at young people out of work, the scheme helps prevent long-term unemployment by offering funding to employers to create new job placements for 16 to 24 year olds. The funding covers 100% of the National Minimum Wage and associated NI contributions for 25 hours per week for a total of 6 months. SS confirmed the scheme has had an overwhelming response from employers. At the time of speaking, there were over 300 open vacancies in Dorset and another couple of hundreds due to go live shortly, covering a broad range of sectors. There were 100 young people in Dorset already placed on kickstart opportunities. SS said they are mindful about the next steps post these 6 months – opportunities that will capitalise on the young people's improved skills and confidence.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A new pop-up job centre <p>will be opened in Bournemouth in Tringham House. This centre will offer extra capacity and space to engage on a face-to-face basis following socially distancing procedures, which is limited in the existing JCP in Bournemouth. The centre will work on appointment only basis.</p> <p><u>Comments</u> Apprenticeship as an opportunity after a kickstart placement DG picked up on SS's comment about post-kickstart opportunities and offered an idea for developing a referral programme in collaboration between the DWP and colleges and other apprenticeship providers offering apprenticeships as a progression route for young people completing a kickstart placement. SS welcomed this idea and felt a piece of work on building the DWP teams' understanding of the available opportunities locally would be key over the coming months.</p>	<p>SS to follow-up with DG on the post-kickstart referral</p>

<p>3.5</p>	<p>Kickstart placement assessment NN asked whether there was a process assessing the skills and experience on the kickstart scheme and SS confirmed the DWP is doing a diagnostic assessment for the young people claiming UC and would look into completing a re-diagnostic at the point of completion of a kickstart placement.</p> <p>Collaboration RoD offered the DSTPN's support as part of post-kickstart pathways and referral and advised they are a delivery partner in a DfE funded "Apprenticeship Support and Knowledge" project, and are well placed to offer career and employment support CPD training.</p> <p>Graduates ZC commented that some graduates might not be aware that they are eligible for the scheme and SS said that they should be informed and encouraged to sign up for UC to be able to access this support.</p> <p>Training providers apprenticeships update RoD gave an update on apprenticeships delivery and showed over 160 apprenticeships available in Dorset area in March, marking a 14% increase compared to January and things are looking up across sectors. RoD noted one of the challenges was to know how many apprenticeships were available as not all employers are listing their openings on the Government's apprenticeship service website. Rod has been working with Dorset LEP to create a dashboard of available apprenticeships using Labour Insights by Burning Glass Technologies database of real-time vacancy data, which provides a fuller picture of all available vacancies; this is now available on the Dorset LEP LMI website. Alongside kickstart scheme, apprenticeships as well as traineeships are part of the Government's Plan for jobs and the recovery drive, and further focus on traineeships may be required going forward.</p>	
<p>4</p>	<p>Place</p>	
<p>4.1</p>	<p>Dorset Local Skills Report 2021 RD updated on the progress on the Dorset Local Skills Report – the go-to document for everything skills related, produced consistently across all LEP areas. RD noted the first draft of the report was submitted to Government on 5th February and we are on track to publish the report by the end of March 2021 deadline. The feedback on the draft has been very positive with some parts provided to other LEP areas as exemplar and a few finishing touches left to complete in meeting the recommendations and publishing the report.</p> <p><u>Comments</u> What is next AT asked whether going forward any funding would be directly related to the findings of the report. RD responded we are not aware of clear link to funding but the report provides the government with the wider picture of skills strengths and needs and priority areas for investment locally. EH also established it is a record of the work of the SAPB to date and a precursor of the new governance structure around local skills landscape and funding emerging as part of the recently published white paper.</p>	<p>RD to notify the committee upon report publication</p>

<p>4.2</p>	<p>A live document DM shared an aspiration that the report remains a live engaging document and a repository of all the good work across the SAP Board and partners in the county. EH agreed that this is very much the intention and emphasised on the quality of the evidence base and the need to continue actively growing, enriching and utilising our intelligence. SS from DWP also confirmed the value of this work to DWP's work in supporting the unemployed people of Dorset.</p> <p>BCP Towns Fund AT confirmed the good news that Bournemouth has been awarded £21.7m as part of the Towns Fund and discussions were due at the coming Board meeting on how the fund will be allocated.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employment and skills hub AT shared proposals within the Towns Fund plan for an employment and skills hub at the Royal Arcade, noting the multifaceted facility was subject to Board agreement and the operating model being designed with Bournemouth University, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reception/ triage - Business incubator – 60-80 seats working with universities and colleges to support emerging business ideas and feed them into local business support - Testing lab – AI/VR - Training rooms/ business support space - Meeting place/ coffee lounge/ networking and events space • King's Park Activity and Learning centre LS also gave an update on one arm of the hub – the King's Park activity and learning centre planned to provide alternative curriculum mostly focused on leisure, fitness and recreation as part of the hub's offer. It is envisioned as a multidimensional centre combining skills and learning with activity and wellbeing. The Council already owns the lease for the land and will seek to purchase the lease back of the Kings Park bowling centre and work with the community to establish a wider community benefit and partnership work and a range of health, well-being and recreation activities, while retaining the first floor for skills, learning and work experience opportunities. <p><u>Comments</u></p> <p>Collaborative work RR welcomed the plans and asked whether Dorset healthcare have been involved in the plans for the activity centre, noting they would very much be looking at supporting that project directly or in kind. AT/LS confirmed they would follow up with RR.</p> <p>Timings and updates EH asked about timings and AT/LS said these will depend on acquiring and making the spaces suitable to use. The Chair confirmed these plans are of interest to the SAP board in terms of collaborations and skills updates therefore updates on developments would be welcomed.</p>	<p>AT/LS to link up with Dorset Healthcare in activity centre plans</p> <p>AT/LS to update the SAPB on developments</p>
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5	Future	
5.1	<p>Investment Prospectus Update</p> <p>The Chair noted some uncertainties nationally linked to the future of the industrial strategy but confirmed that the Investment Prospectus is progressing well and will be published shortly with skills being an overarching enabler across all 4 key themes: Living, Smart, Well and Natural. The Chair commended the investment prospectus in being a piece of collaborative work, highlighting the areas where Dorset requires investment based on the local needs, priorities and aspirations. RD confirmed that the prospectus will be discussed at the March LEP Board and made publicly available shortly after and the SAPB will be informed.</p>	RD to follow up on prospectus publication
5.2	<p>Skills Commission</p> <p>The Chair followed up on progress with the Skills Commission - an idea agreed at the previous SAPB to involve partners across the two councils to look at the future skills, and aligning these with the strategic priorities, aspirations and employer demand locally. The commission would also explore ideas to realising aspirations, such as devolution of adult education budget to allow local decision-making based on our needs. The commission has now been discussed at a meeting with the leader of the Dorset Council joined by Councillors interested in skills, and another meeting is being planned with BCP Council. In the hope that this is a pan-Dorset commission, both councils would need to agree on the process and funding to take this to fruition and take it to a future LEP Board.</p>	
5.3	<p>Skills for Jobs - White Paper</p> <p>As unfortunately, LR was unable to join the meeting to give an update on the Skills for Jobs White Paper as planned in the agenda, the Chair wrapped up the White Paper and highlighted some lack of clarity around the forming of another body led by the Chamber of Commerce to work on skills priorities locally.</p> <p><u>Comments</u></p> <p>Lack of clarity</p> <p>RoD agreed that the interpretation on the White Paper continues and the work with Chambers has started taking shape but there are distinctly varying views across the neighbouring counties. DG agreed that while confirming the focus on skills, there is confusion and speculation as to how and why the new boards and skills improvement plans will work, and whether these plans have been designed in isolation from SAP Boards and work already in train locally with missing links to other local initiatives such as the work of the DWP. DG raised concerns that this might mean lack of collaboration, rival panels and duplication of work.</p> <p>The Chair expressed gratitude for these insights and extended these to the group for working so well together across training providers, industry and local authorities and whilst these challenges exist and despite the outcomes going forward, the established spirit of collaboration within the SAP Board and partnership work will continue going forwards to address the Dorset's skills challenges.</p>	

6	AOB	
	None raised	
7	Date of Next Meeting	
	10 March 2021 10-12 am	