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# Delivery Plan

2021-23

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# INTRODUCTION

Dorset seeks to be an exemplar of sustainable coastal living where new ways of living and working are tackling climate change head-on and where 'a way to age' that's fit for the 21st century forms a key economic and social opportunity. Dorset has all the advantages of a highly self-contained location with a simplified governance landscape, and includes the newest emerging City Region in the UK alongside vibrant, largely rural surrounds.

Dorset is evolving, innovating and accelerating its economy. An economy worth £18.5 billion, a population approaching 800,000 and a business community of over 32,000 a location of choice for Financial Services market leaders, a top area for high growth digital business— there is much to build on. However, with a persistent productivity gap and the oldest population in the UK leading to a potential vacancy replacement of over a third of our workforce by 2027, there is much to do, particularly in a climate emergency, the impact of COVID-19 and establishing a new trade environment after the UK's exit from the EU.

It is our role to champion Dorset's potential and act as a convener and a catalyst to drive a strong and sustainable economy and the forthcoming delivery year – 2021/2022 – will be unlike any other. An increase focus is needed on skills, business support and building confidence in our economy.

The pandemic has had an impact on the lives of those living in Dorset in every way imaginable. We have a huge tourism and hospitality sector, which is a trade that has been one of the hardest hit in the pandemic; COVID -19 will therefore cause significant employment and productivity issues for Dorset and impact deeply for a considerable duration on our region, more so than in most other places of the UK. The pandemic has exposed the fragility that this type of crisis



can present to business resilience and stability in some of our key sectors but it has also created opportunity, and the ability to find solutions with new investment such as skills development or businesses repurposing their offering to new markets.

We aim to become stronger, adaptable and more resilient in Dorset than before the pandemic and this Delivery Plan sets out our programme of work for 2021/22 to help achieve this. The Delivery Plan reflects the context of Dorset and the growth ambition for our region, incorporating COVID-19 recovery; it will be regularly reviewed and monitored to ensure that we have the flexibility to respond to new developments and that we have the capacity, capability and expertise to meet new challenges and opportunities. As such some proposed interventions, may evolve, grow or, in some rare cases, possibly not be taken forward to prioritise other activity.

The Delivery Plan aligns to our Local Industrial Strategy and our new Dorset Investment Prospectus and a wider suite of detailed economic reports that have helped us to better understand where Dorset LEP can really make a difference to our economy and business community. This plan also builds on our excellent track record of delivery, as well as our outstanding work across stakeholders in effecting meaningful impact.

# STRATEGY

We act with credibility and authority to promote Dorset, its economy and business potential. Utilising the experience and skills of Board Directors, the Executive and senior stakeholder representatives, we will continue to articulate the vision and strategic priorities for economic development across Dorset, building on our track record of securing investment and achieving impact, continuing to drive progress to grow a productive economy and improve prosperity for all. Activities in 2021/22 are:

## Strategic Development

- Publish and promote a compelling, evidence-based ambitious Dorset Investment Prospectus.
- Influence the future Government investment landscape to ensure Dorset receives its fair share of funding.
- Work with stakeholders to explore benefits of increased devolution in areas such as skills and transport.
- Undertake forward planning, utilising future economic scenarios/evidence – including impact of economic shock and new market opportunities – and using knowledge and learning to influence, agitate and advocate for Dorset.
- Pitch for 'national centres' such as Future Networks Lab Accelerator, Battle Lab integration with Defence & Security Accelerator, UK Institute of Smart Ageing, England Aquaculture Centre of Innovation, government departments.
- Pitch for a Digital Skills Partnership for Dorset, Rural Productivity Deal, Tourism Deal, recognition as a City Region and devolution deals around transport and skills.
- Develop cluster accelerators in key locations across Dorset to amplify pace of growth and opportunities for wider collaboration in One Health, defence and creative/ digital.
- Seek the establishment of Government Department presence in Dorset.
- Support the promotion of a city region concept.
- Continue to support the development of a Creative and Cultural Excellence Plan for Dorset.
- Commission work on Dorset supply chains and sectors.

## Strategic Advocacy

- Identify areas of collaboration for most impact across the Great South West, Western Gateway, National partnerships (including sector deals such as a Tourism Zone and a Rural Productivity Deal).
- Take a lead role in areas of activity in the wider LEP Network that align to our Delivery Plan priorities.
- Continue leadership through Great South West All-Party Parliamentary Group.
- Lobby for the extension of Enterprise Zones.
- Working through the Business and Transport Forum of Western Gateway Sub National Transport Body, contribute to the development of a long-term strategic programme of transport measures across the South West/Western Gateway.
- Strengthen cross-LEP working via the South Western LEPs Energy Hub and Southern LEPs grouping.
- Continue to work with business representative organisations such as the Chamber of Commerce & Industry, CBI, FSB and others.
- Continue to engage with Maritime UK South West.
- Continue to engage with South West Defence Cluster.



# DELIVERY - CAPITAL PROGRAMMES

## Getting Building Fund

The main focus of activities in this fund in 2021/22 will be to manage the contracted projects to ensure that the Getting Building Fund is fully and effectively utilised. We will continue to ensure delivery of the projects to achieve the outputs by 2022; this includes across the programme:

- 16,000 new superfast broadband connections
- 222 jobs safeguarded
- 120 new jobs created
- 40,445 new learners assisted
- 80 new apprenticeships
- 1,787 m2 improved learning/ training space unlocked
- 1,505 m2 of commercial floor space unlocked
- 250 businesses/ institutions assisted
- 23,100kg of CO2 emissions saved.
- Plus R&D floorspace

## Local Growth Deal

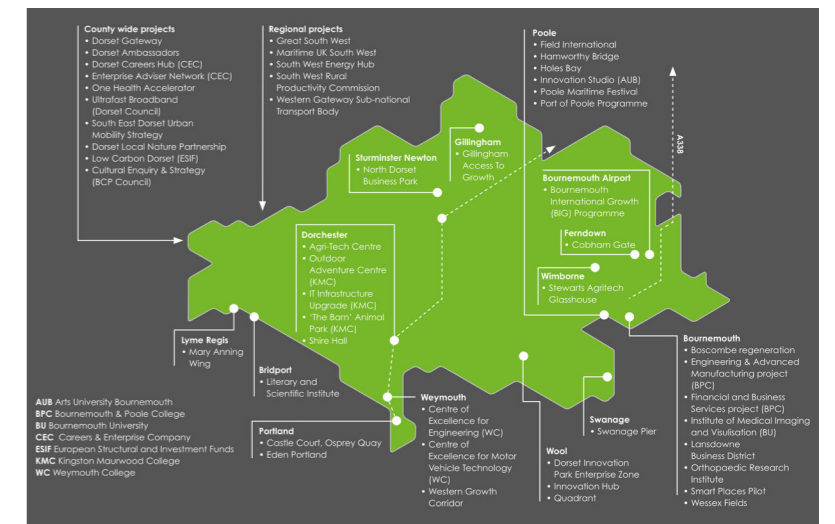
As this programme will be closed, we will promote the success of the fund for Dorset. The main focus for 2021/22 will be to manage the contracted projects to ensure they continue to deliver the predicted outputs until 2025; this includes across the programme up to:

- 74,824 new learners assisted
- 19,526 jobs including apprenticeships
- 5,147 houses completed
- 27,012 m2 of new/ improved skills floorspace
- Plus road resurfacing, newly built roads and new cycle ways.

## Growing Places Fund

We will continue to promote the Growing Places Fund loan scheme which supports capital projects that encourage economic growth in Dorset. The fund is designed to unlock capital projects which have a significant economic impact and the potential to increase innovation and productivity, create jobs and housing, and deliver tangible economic outcomes and may also be used where businesses are unable to access alternative funding mechanisms for viable schemes that will deliver economic growth and support Dorset LEP's strategic objectives.

With the anticipated repayment of some Growing Places loans we will generate a pipeline of opportunities to ensure it is fully deployed to support the development of the Dorset economy.



# DELIVERY - SKILLS

Our ambition for Dorset is that by 2038, Dorset's workforce will be highly productive, aspirational and agile so that the talents of all contribute to prosperity, wellbeing and innovation.



Our Local Industrial Strategy details an ambition for Dorset to create a total skills solution to unlock talent across Dorset, making training and jobs accessible across the region, boosting talent attraction and retention as well as building a pipeline of skills at leadership, management and other workforce levels.

Activity under skills for 2021/22 takes into account national skills policies and the seismic change of pace of skills due to the pandemic as well as supply and demand changes due to the EU exit. Strengthening the productivity and sustainability of our core businesses and develop skills for future growth and focus will include retraining adults where needed from COVID-19 worst-hit sectors to secure employment and to increase the number of workers in key sectors to meet new demand. Young people are among the hardest hit in the current crisis with up to a quarter of young people (18-24) have become unemployed or furloughed. Large numbers of young people are employed in the sectors most severely affected by the lockdown – such as leisure, retail and hospitality.

## Skills Strategy

- Develop a clear pathway to securing the skills and talent Dorset requires to raise productivity through the Local Skills Report.
- Ensure close alignment between the Local Skills Report, Dorset Skills Activities Plan, our Local Industrial Strategy and Investment Prospectus, with a focus on Technical Level skills development as well as higher and degree level skills, within priority sectors, the continued promotion of apprenticeships at all levels, the skills required for the post COVID-19 recovery phase and the importance of developing our future workforce.
- Ensure the Skills Advisory Panel & Board remains relevant to meeting the current and future skill needs of business and residents and that it utilises Labour Market & Insights data in decision making.
- Continue to produce regular Labour Market & Insights data and analysis for all skills providers across Dorset and in partnership with key stakeholders.



## Skills Partnerships

- Strengthen partnership working and engagement between skills and training providers and industry through establishing a Skills Commission.
- Work with local partners to develop data and labour market information that will inform and help shape the curriculum offer across Dorset and establish an agreed baseline of skills data from which to measure impact over time, e.g. uptake of STEM subjects, course enrolment and completion in derived wards, digital inclusion of the population, digital capability of the workforce.
- Ensure greater involvement of businesses in skills activities in a two-way flow both ensuring the skills agenda feeds into businesses and that businesses have more contact directly with those in schools.

## Skills Projects

- Further strengthen links between schools, colleges and business to improve the careers offer in Dorset via the Careers Hub and Enterprise Adviser Network.
- Ensure our Enterprise Adviser Network and Careers Hub achieve targets agreed with Careers & Enterprise Company and agree new targets for 2021/22.
- Implement a Mid-life MOT programme to encourage people in their 40s, 50s and 60s to make more active planning in the key areas of work, wellbeing and money.
- Ensure the delivery of outcomes and outputs from investment of Skills Capital funding contracted through our funding programmes such as Local Growth Deal and Getting Building Fund.
- Deliver Skills Boot Camps to help local people advance or pivot their skills into growing sectors resilient to the current economic downturn.
- Support the development of providers for the roll out of T-level qualifications.
- Support the increase of apprenticeships and traineeships across Dorset.
- Offer relevant skills training in LMI data for Department for Work and Pensions and JobCentre Plus coaches.
- Support the Restart programme, which is focused on getting long term unemployed people back into work.



# DELIVERY - BUSINESS SUPPORT

Dorset's Investment prospectus outlines our plans to enhance the current innovation eco-system, promoting Dorset as a centre of innovation with the expertise, infrastructure, environment and culture for all businesses to develop ideas and solve challenges, and to drive activity, cooperation, employment, investment and as well as inspiring and enabling innovation. A key delivery mechanism for this is via the range of Dorset LEP business support services.

## DORSET GATEWAY

The impact of COVID-19 on the UK economy has exacerbated an already weakening position and removed a significant amount of industrial and commercial capacity during lockdown restrictions impacting on overall levels of activity. This coupled with the EU exit has left local businesses in a hugely challenging position. We aim to support businesses that want to grow, increase employment, improve the competitiveness of Dorset businesses and encourage inward investment to the county. Our 2021/22 activity will be focused on supporting businesses to recover from these impacts to build back a stronger economy.

### Business Support Strategy

- Providing strategic direction in shaping the current and future business support provision across Dorset;
- Promoting Dorset as a key inward investment area for innovative, ambitious and fast growing businesses;
- Helping Dorset's businesses to access opportunities for growth through exporting goods and services overseas;
- Focusing resources on our existing strengths and high-growth sectors;
- Ensuring innovation is a key foundation of productivity in Dorset
- Helping Dorset businesses to increase their resilience against the impact of economic shocks.
- With partners, develop a clear pathway for local businesses to find the support they need to grow in Dorset.
- Provide leadership to Dorset based businesses via a user-friendly format to access relevant information including scale-up, business model innovation support, access to skills development, support accessing finance.
- Ensure close alignment between the business support activity, our Local Industrial Strategy and Investment Prospectus, with a focus on COVID-19 recovery and growing exports in light of the EU exit.
- Ensure the Business Growth & Inward Investment Committee remains relevant to meeting the current and future needs of business and that it utilises data in decision making.
- Continue to produce and analyse data regarding businesses in Dorset in partnership with key stakeholders.



### Business Support Partnerships

- Work across the Great South West area, to create a package of additional support for Dorset Businesses. This will include providing personalised support to exporters, assisting with the development of local trade priorities, namely clean energy and marine, and agriculture and ensuring businesses are better able to connect with opportunities to attract investment and trade overseas.
- Continue to work with partners across the South West on joint funding bids and delivery of funding for joint initiatives such as that from Department for International Trade.
- Work with Arts University Bournemouth and Enterprise Europe Network to establish ways to bolster and better connect our local SME innovation offer.
- Continue working locally with business representative organisation.
- pandemic, including fully-funded one-to-one support with specialists, based on their particular business needs and webinars.
- Deliver a scale-up programme for Dorset businesses, covering advice on end-to-end support, space to grow, access to finance, business continuity and health and safety.
- Deliver a bid writing support service aimed at supporting high-potential/high-growth organisations looking to apply for funding that will help to meet the challenges set-out in Dorset's Local Industrial Strategy.
- Deliver Crowdfund Dorset business; a fund to give existing micro and small businesses the opportunity to receive grant funding to help them recover from the pandemic.
- Deliver COVID-19 support programmes including the Kick-starting Tourism Package.
- Host and participate in business support related events and masterclasses.
- Deliver the Dorset Ambassador Programme where business people from all sectors who are passionate about being located and doing business in the region promote Dorset as a great place to do business.

### Business Support Projects

- Continue to support start-ups and established businesses to grow through our Business Engagement and Dorset Gateway activities through providing assistance to businesses, supporting new exporters and identifying opportunities post EU Exit.
- Deliver 20 cohorts of the Peer Networks Programme for SME leaders that want to grow and develop their organisation by helping them navigate multiple stages in the business change cycle.
- Deliver a business resilience programme to assist businesses trading out of the COVID-19
- Continue to support High Potential Opportunities in Dorset, such as Aquaculture.
- Ensure Dorset Gateway achieves targets agreed with BEIS.
- Ensure the delivery of relevant outcomes and outputs from capital funding contracted through our funding programmes such as Local Growth Deal and Getting Building Fund.

# DELIVERY - INFRASTRUCTURE

Dorset aims to be an exemplar of sustainable coastal living where new ways of living and working are tackling climate change head-on. The ambition for 2030 is that Dorset is enabling its urban centres to reach their capacity for growth whilst ensuring that connected rural and coastal areas flourish, achieving an inclusive approach to growth. That this growth enhances the natural environment and is not achieved at the expense of it, and that it is part of a culture-led transformation, built on a digital opportunity, that also inspires innovation and enterprise.



However, as outlined in the Local Industrial Strategy, Dorset is hard to reach physically and requires significant investment to drive road, rail, port and air connectivity to strengthen opportunities for new and growing businesses. It is also essential to address barriers to employee and learner travel, housing and mobility to support business productivity across the region while creating a net gain for biodiversity. Infrastructure investment in our region needs to be prioritised in order to support future economic growth in Dorset and in 2021/22 we will undertake activity to facilitate this.

## Infrastructure Strategy

- Ensure close alignment between the Local Authority infrastructure plans for the place and the Dorset Local Industrial Strategy and Investment Plan.
- Strengthen the pipeline of infrastructure projects for future public and private investment through the investment Prospectus.
- Provide an evidence base to demonstrate the energy challenges in Dorset and work towards establishing an investment programme to develop the region's energy infrastructure to prepare for a decarbonised, locally generated network.
- Explore creating an infrastructure map for Dorset which outlines strengths, weaknesses, challenges, future plans, priorities, inward investment and growth, linked to the Dorset Investment Prospectus.
- Seek Digital Catapult involvement in our activity.
- Support the plans for an Aquaculture Centre of Innovation & Park.
- Promote a Digital Skills Partnership for Dorset.

## Infrastructure Partnerships

- Work with partners through the Strategic Infrastructure Committee to draw the strands of infrastructure together and help fulfil our ambition of Dorset being a genuinely SMART place that is well-connected, allowing people to interact both in person and digitally as well as a place that is energy resilient, utilising local renewable energy sources.
- Remain an active member of the South West Energy Hub.
- Working through the Business and Transport Forum of Western Gateway Sub National Transport Body, contribute to the development of a long-term strategic programme of transport measures across the South West.
- Continue to engage with Maritime UK South West.
- Continue to work with the Dorset Local Nature Partnership and Rural Enterprise Group.

## Infrastructure Projects

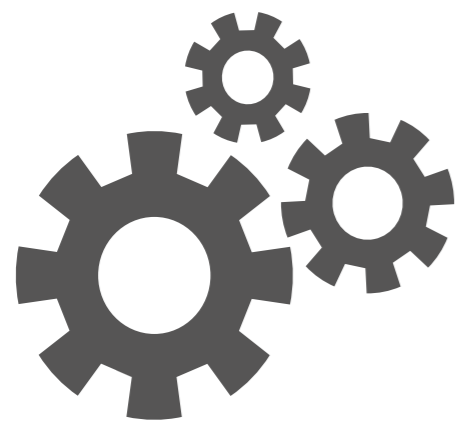
- Ensure the delivery of outcomes and outputs from investment of infrastructure capital funding contracted through our funding programmes such as Local Growth Deal, Getting Building Fund and Growing Places Fund.
- Work with partners and stakeholders on their regeneration programmes for their town centres, including post COVID-19 recovery, and encouraging greater resilience and diversification away from reliance single sectors to a more rounded and experiential offer.
- Continue to promote and work with partners to deliver a range of new housing in Dorset including Homes England.



# GOVERNANCE & CORPORATE SERVICES

## Governance Framework

- Ensure compliance with the National Assurance Framework.
- Review and update the Local Assurance Framework, all policies, standard operating procedures and Committee Terms of Reference.
- Participate in formal and informal peer review opportunities.
- Implement any actions from external / internal scrutiny of our programme.
- Ensure effective overview and scrutiny of our activities.
- Manage the corporate risk framework.
- Manage the monitoring and evaluation framework.
- Ensure compliance in contracting and procurement.
- Create an annual report of activities.
- Successfully participate in an Annual Performance Review with government.
- Maintain effective working relationship with the Accountable Body.
- Work through the Dorset LEP network and its effective peer review process to support an excellent Annual Performance Review.



## Board & Committees

- Administer Board and Committees linked to the Dorset LEP governance plan.
- Ensure the Board is representative of the Dorset population and meets the maximum Board size of 20 members and up to 5 co-opted members.
- Ensure a minimum of 35% female representation is maintained on the Board and work towards a 50% target by winter 2022 latest.
- Ensure a minimum two-thirds private sector representation on the Board.
- Proactively seek the creation of a more diverse Board and Committee membership.
- Undertake an annual Board performance review.
- Ensure a pipeline of members is maintained for the Board so vacancies are easily filled following an open and transparent process.
- Review all Committees to ensure they operate effectively and to identify any changes in membership which may be required.

## Communications

- Effective delivery of Dorset LEP communications and engagement plan, including blogs, news, events and increase to Twitter/website traffic.
- Ensure the timeliness, regularity and volume of communications is suitable as to fully promote the key outputs of the delivery functions across our portfolio – including capital programmes, skills and business support, as well as strategy and governance.
- Create a Stakeholder Engagement Plan to increase our communication reach through a range of methods
- Review the website to ensure it reflects current priorities and old information is archived.
- Create case studies of all projects and feature these on our webpages.
- Create thought-leadership pieces throughout the year to promote the expertise of our Board and partners.
- Ensure diversity is considered in all communications, from actively targeting a more diverse population for future Board and Committee recruitment, to creating communication series targeting less well represented groups regarding opportunities, to ensuring accessibility is a key consideration when creating web content.

## Company Operations

- Remain compliant with all UK Business Law requirements, including reporting our Annual Accounts to Companies House, and any changes to Directors' information in a timely manner.
- Hold an AGM which will be open to the public and businesses and properly promoted.
- Ensure we have tools, technology, capacity, and security measures in place to support effective and safe remote working and have access to wellbeing material.
- Ensure operational processes remain effective given social distancing and lockdown measures.
- Identify single points of failure in our operations and endeavour to eliminate these.
- Map key dependencies to understand where disruptions might impact and maintain a business continuity plan.
- Improve financial transparency.
- Continued implementation of the Dorset LEP workforce development plan.

