

DORSET LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP (LEP) OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

30 JULY 2020 FROM 2-4pm

VIDEO CONFERENCING MEETING

MINUTES

Committee Attendees:

- Sara Uzzell (SU)
- Aaron Lawes (AL)
- Dave Bolwell (DB)
- Jon Andrews (JA)
- Paul Hilliard (PH)
- Phil Broadhead (PB)

Also Present:

- Lorna Carver (LC) (Dorset LEP)
- Corrina Osborne (CO) (Dorset LEP)
- David Lawrence (DL) (Dorset LEP)
- Martina Hanulova (MH) (Dorset LEP)

Item	Notes and Decisions	Action
1.	<p>No apologies were received.</p> <p>SU welcomed all to the first meeting. She explained that as a Board member she will not be Chairing the group but is facilitating the first session and there is an agenda item later to discuss the appointment of Chair.</p> <p>SU outlined the purpose of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee and stated that she would value the role of the Committee in particular as their role of Critical Friend.</p> <p>The Committee undertook a round of introductions.</p> <p>LC provided background to the Committee and stated more private sector membership would be sought. LC stated the Dorset LEP would like their input into enhancements and improvements over all areas of activity. LC stated Dorset LEP will work with the Committee to establish the agenda items for future meetings which will cover the main business of the group. She highlighted the importance of being able to demonstrate to government that public money has had the level of scrutiny needed.</p> <p>SU provided an outline of the Board and its members and highlighted that most sectors are represented and the Board is diverse. She also highlighted that the role of the Board is to represent all businesses from the micro to the large international organisations based in Dorset.</p> <p>SU recommended the Committee members read the Local Industrial Strategy to understand the Dorset LEP vision.</p>	
2.	Terms of Reference & Background	
	DL explained that the Dorset LEP is a company and uses principles of the UK	

Corporate Governance Code but also receives funding from a range of sources including government departments. Therefore in accepting public money we agree to greater public scrutiny than a company would usually have. This means we remain flexible but also completely open and transparent about our processes.

DL highlighted that within the Terms of Reference it is stated that the objectives of the Committee are to learn, improve and progress the Dorset LEP processes. He emphasised that the Committee should:

- Review outputs and outcomes from programmes.
- Review the decision making of Dorset LEP's Board and sub-committees to ensure due process has been followed and there is a transparent audit trail.
- Review the decision making in respect to funded programmes such as the Local Growth Fund.
- Review the implementation of the Strategic Economic Vision and other relevant strategies and identify opportunities for improvement.
- Review the output and outcome information of the programme to ensure that Dorset LEP activities are having a beneficial impact on the economy of Dorset (whilst taking account of the work of the Performance and Investment Committee).
- To make recommendations regarding processes which are proportionate for consideration to the Board or Committee with respect to the discharge of its functions.
- Review and advise Dorset LEP on matters of transparency, ensuring the Dorset LEP maintains its requirements as set out in the National Framework.
- To be proportionate and reasonable having regard to the work of the other committees of the LEP Board.
- To liaise with other LEPs and Dorset LEP team over the development and dissemination of best practice.

DL informed the Committee that Dorset LEP will be seeking additional private sector members. He stated that the Terms of Reference will be reviewed annually to ensure the most effective working processes are in place.

DL opened the floor for questions.

PH requested clarification as to the rationale to remain separated from the Board given the Committees monitoring function. DL explained that the rationale is in order for it to act as a Critical Friend in testing whether the processes in place are appropriate and are followed through. He stated the Chair of this Committee has a direct link to the Chair of the Board in order to transfer questions, advice and support.

AL sought clarity regarding conflicts of interest and the number of private sector members sought. LC shared the Dorset LEP governance structure in order to show how the various Committees feed into the Board and explained that there is a difference between conflicts of interest and experience/ insight. LC also stated that more private sector members would be sought but these need to be the right representatives and we wanted to ensure the Committee was initialised. DL added that the Terms of Reference allow for up to 8 members.

PB sought clarity regarding making recommendations to the Board for consideration. LC described the Articles of Association under which the Board operates and highlighted that papers from this Committee, including recommendations made, will be viewed by the Board.

	<p>JA asked whether the Committee is accountable to the community and business rather than just the Dorset LEP Board. He also asked whether there was an expectation to represent the whole of Dorset, how consensus will be reached and the frequency of meetings. DL stated that bi-annually may be insufficient and recommended three times per year. SU agreed as this fits within the Board meetings which are every other month. She also stated that all decisions are made with the whole of Dorset in mind. LC added in terms of accountability that all materials are placed on our website and the Board is made up of our local business community.</p> <p>Action: Schedule Committee meeting three times per year.</p> <p>PB asked for clarification in the Terms of Reference as to whether these should include that in the event that the Committee cannot reach consensus rather than being escalated to the Chair of the Board, whether the Chair of this Committee should have the casting vote. LC agreed that the Terms of reference will be updated to reflect this.</p> <p>Action: Update terms of reference regarding casting vote of the Chair.</p> <p>PH asked for clarification regarding conflicts of interest. SU stated it is the usual practice to ask for these at the beginning of the Committee meeting and this will operate from the next meeting onwards. AL asked that a conflict be noted as one funded project in the presentation given by MH on funded projects relates to a client of his firm.</p> <p>JA asked whether there would be an opportunity to physically meet once Covid-19 restrictions were lifted and SU confirmed there would.</p>	<p>CO</p> <p>CO</p>
3.	Projects & Programme Report	
	<p>MH provided an overview of the programmes in order for the Committee to understand the breadth of activities of the Dorset LEP.</p> <p>The presentation included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The overall amount of funding secured for Dorset through the Dorset LEP and the also the match funding element. • That the Dorset LEP is overseen by the Department for Business Energy & Industrial Strategy and Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG). • The National and Local Assurance Frameworks, the latter of which demonstrates our commitment to transparency and accountability and sets out our approach to appraise, deliver, monitor and evaluate schemes to achieve value for money. • The role of the Accountable body and Section151 officer. • An overview of the Dorset LEP programmes and the reporting schedules to government/ funders including the Local Growth Fund, Growing Places Fund, Careers & Enterprise Company, Dorset Gateway/ Growth Hub, Dorset Innovation Park/ Enterprise Zone and European Structural and Investment Funds. • Due diligence process to provide clear and transparent guidance on how Dorset LEP projects are selected, appraised, approved, delivered and monitored. • Funding decision making flow chart. <p>JA asked how Brexit is influencing European funding received and LC stated EU funding for the programme referenced is secured for Dorset and</p>	

	<p>underwritten by Government.</p> <p>PH asked if there was an amount allocated for the Innovation Park funding. LC stated the land is owned by Dorset Council and the benefits will be over 25 years but the actual amount is dependent on factors such as which businesses are housed there and therefore estimates range in value. SU added that the Enterprise Zone is a good example of a project that could transform the economy due to the long term benefits that could be realised.</p> <p>AL asked if there was activity undertaken in light of Covid-19. LC informed that Dorset LEP has received additional funding as a result of this and existing projects are monitored very closely to ensure any impacts are addressed. For all existing projects there is sufficient flexibility that they will not run beyond the final funding date of March 31st.</p>	
5.	Future Work Programme	
	<p>SU asked if there was any further information the Committee needed in order to determine future work programme, such as the Local Industrial Strategy.</p> <p>PB stated that future work should include ensuring ideas come through from business and understanding how these are assessed. He also asked if the decisions of the Performance & Investment Committee are overseen. LC explained that whilst that committee does have decision making capabilities these are limited to matters such as extending a deadline within a permitted funding period. LC stated that the Dorset LEP Board are the ultimate decision making body but recommendations to them come from the suite of Committees which report in to them.</p> <p>DL stated that future work should include the end-to-end processes in terms of transparency such as the process for supporting strategic items the Dorset LEP wishes to invest in such as digital infrastructure. This process review would include how interests of various organisations and businesses are gained, how applications are submitted, how applications are reviewed and how the funding is awarded.</p> <p>PH stated future work should include barriers to projects that have not delivered on time.</p> <p>SU stated future work should include how businesses are engaged to submit applications for funding. AL agreed and stated this should include ensuring paperwork to be completed is suited to businesses.</p> <p>LC has made the following suggestions for future work:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluations of programmes insofar as ensuring assurance of delivery of a programme as a whole. • Ensuring public engagement and promotion is maximised. • Support for more peer review activity with other LEPs. • Impact of Covid-19 on strategic objectives. <p>• SU stated the suggestions will be captured and shared ahead of the next meeting.</p>	
6.	Chair & Deputy Chair roles	
	<p>SU stated she will attend future Committee meetings as an attendee.</p> <p>SU requested nominations for Chair and Deputy Chair from the Committee members. PB was appointed as Chair and AL as Deputy Chair.</p>	

	<p>LC confirmed that minutes would be circulated along with a request for any further suggestion for project ideas and to contact Dorset LEP staff if there are any questions at all. SU also requested the presentation slides by MH were circulated.</p> <p>It was agreed that a meeting would be scheduled for early September.</p> <p>Action: Circulate minutes, presentation and call for further ideas and establish a meeting for early September. Following this, meetings would be scheduled for 3 times per year.</p>	CO
7.	Any Other Business	

Note: Date of Next Meeting – tbc