

DORSET LEP SKILLS ADVISORY PANEL & BOARD
17 November 2020, 2 pm-4pm

Virtual meeting via Teams

AGENDA

#		Item	Lead	Purpose	Annex
1		Welcome, introductions and apologies	Emma Hunt Chair	ACTION Welcome, introduce attendees and note apologies	
2		Approval of minutes of last meeting – Sept 2020	Emma Hunt Chair	ACTION To agree minutes as read and action updates	
3	Recovery	Current Skills Activities report	Rebecca Davies & Skills Team	ACTION Paper to note, for onward circulation to DLEP Board including: SAP Board Local Market Information (LMI) Careers Hub update DWP update	1
4	Place	Dorset Skills Action Plan & Activities 2020-2022	Rebecca Davies	ACTION Update on publication and activities monitoring	
		Big Ideas investment update	Emma Hunt / Sandra Rothwell	ACTION Presentation	2
		Skills Action Plan Roundtable	Emma Hunt Chair	Discussion	
6		AOB	ALL		

DORSET LEP SKILLS ADVISORY PANEL AND BOARD MEETING COVER SHEET

Meeting Date	26 November 2020	Item Number	
Security Level:	Confidential <input type="checkbox"/>	Commercially Sensitive <input type="checkbox"/>	Unclassified <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Paper Title	Dorset LEP Programmes Skills Advisory Panel and Board		
Recommendation	For Information		
Papers are provided for:	Decision <input type="checkbox"/>	Discussion <input type="checkbox"/>	Information <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

1. PURPOSE

This paper is to update members on the work and activity related to skills between Sept – Nov 2020.

2. SUMMARY

2.1 [The Labour Market Information \(LMI\)](#) produced by Dorset LEP and shared with partners reflects the following picture between [Sept – Oct 2020](#):

- **Vacancies continued to bounce back (reaching 5,294) and overtook last year's levels** for the first time since March and this trend is continued in October.
- **The number of claimants remaining persistently high with 4.8 claimants for every vacancy** (down from the peak in May (of 7.5)).
- **Furloughed and self-employed in receipt of SEISS significantly decreased.** There were 34,700 furloughed employees at the end of August - 77,700 less than previous month – from 34% to 10% of eligible employments.
- **Contact jobs** - demand for most direct contact jobs such as sales, customer service and skilled trades is generally lower in 2020, but nurses and care workers remain highly sought after.
- **Employers** - the NHS, Councils, educational, care and residential settings, as well as financial and engineering firms have remained among the top recruiters.
- **Industries show a mixed picture.** Labour demand continued to improve in professional services, manufacturing and engineering, but remained under significant pressure in arts, entertainment, accommodation and food services with 45% fewer vacancies this year compared to last and around 45% of the eligible staff on furlough leave nationally.

The Dorset LEP team continue to produce LMI information for specific industry areas, with national updates available in [Wider economy insights](#) available via Dorset LEP website.

2.2 Big Ideas Investment

The Skills Advisory Panel and Board (SAP&B) have deliberated the potential investment opportunities to meet the future skills needs of Dorset aligned to the Local Investment Strategy (LIS). Collaborative work continues to refine the ideas put forward, with the committee further reviewing submissions at the next meeting (17th Nov 2020).

Proposals have been received that align to all employment areas of the LIS, reflecting the business needs of those areas, and the responses of educators at all levels to meet the skills required.

Minutes of the latest SAP&B can be found online at;

https://www.dorsetlep.co.uk/userfiles/files/SAPBoard_Minutes_14_September_2020_Published_Draft.pdf

2.3 Dorset Skills Action Plan

The SAP&B are just about to go live with publication of [Dorset LEP Skills Action Plan](#) and [associated action list](#).

The Dorset Skills Plan draws on evidence of our regional strengths, prospects and challenges. It shapes the strategic direction of travel to ensure Dorset continues to deliver the employment and skills opportunities that enable people, businesses, and communities to not only recover from the effects of a global pandemic, but also to aspire, thrive and prosper.

The Dorset Skills Action Plan details the rationale behind our vision, our priorities and the headline actions to achieve our ambitions. Whilst it focuses on skills, it sits alongside the Local Industrial Strategy and Investment Prospectus to reflect a holistic view of not only the skills needs which are required to propel Dorset into economic growth but also the infrastructure needed to ensure our region can access the education and training resources so that it can build, retain and attract a skilled workforce both now and in the future.

These documents will feed into the development of the Local Skills Report which is to be produced by the SAPB before the end of March 2021 aiming to be a single consistent report across all SAPs nationally - a one stop shop for the skills work in the county that helps to engage local partners and feed intelligence into central government.

2.4 Dorset Careers Hub Update

The Dorset Careers Hub has made a positive start to the new academic year. The 75 schools and colleges in the network have been restructured into new working groups, and the interim Hub Lead has been in post for 2 months. Also, sub-contracts are signed with both Dorset Council and BCP Council.

At the start of the year the Careers Hub conducted a review of data and objectives, to define priorities for the year. This led to identifying the following priorities.

Aligning Careers Hub with long-term needs of Dorset economy, as identified by LEP research and plans:

- Supporting schools to adapt to Covid
- Develop more efficient and pan-Dorset ways of working
- Within this framework, the following main pan-Dorset projects have been identified.
- Programme Planning (budget - £0)
Supporting new schools to quickly put in place effective careers education plans.

- Activation Fund (budget - £35,000)
£1,000 available to each new school to meet local needs and kick-start their delivery.
- SEND Support (budget - £7,000)
Assistance for all 19 SEND institutions to close gap in average benchmarks achieved.
- Virtual Work Experience (budget - £10,000)
Project to mitigate Covid impact on workplace experiences by delivering virtual work experience to students across Dorset.
- Virtual Careers Fairs (budget - £20,000)
Project to mitigate Covid impact on employer encounters by delivering virtual careers fairs and exhibitions.
- Embedding LMI (budget - £2,000)
Disseminate LEP LMI to all schools through teacher resources, inset days, CPD, and SLT briefing papers.

Covid is the main risk facing the Careers Hub, because of its impact on normal school operations, and the operations of businesses we want to engage in Hub activities. As a result our contractual targets for Benchmark 5 and 6 are at risk, although every effort is being made to overcome the challenges. This situation is not unique to the Dorset Careers Hub, and CEC recognises Dorset as one of its highest-performing Hubs. CEC is monitoring benchmarks nationwide, and may make adjustments to targets during the year in response to actual performance.

2.5 Department of Work and Pensions update

Department of work and Pensions (DWP) continue to provide assistance to business and workers through a variety of methods, looking to provide consistency of their strategy delivery with innovative solutions during the pandemic. Dorset LEP has provided LMI information through workshops to Dorset Jobcentre work coaches, ensuring informed guidance for coachees. This sharing of data will continue through monthly updates and new staff training. The latest highlighted information includes:

- *Kickstart Materials* - Kickstart Scheme details have been updated and promoted to employers. The number of initial applications rejected exceeded expectations and DWP were offering support for those who wish to successfully reapply. Details for employers and gateways are found at [Kickstart materials \(link is external\)](#)
- New Work Coaches - 4,500 [new Work Coaches \(link is external\)](#) are now lined up to join Jobcentres across the UK. The next round of Work Coach recruitment will kick off in mid-November 2020 with thousands of new vacancies available.
- *Business Readiness Webinars* - Over 3,000 people have attended [sector-specific webinars \(link is external\)](#) to help them get ready for the end of the transition period. Now with just 63 days to go until the UK's new start, the Business Secretary Alok Sharma is encouraging firms to sign up for a second phase of webinars.

- *Support for Businesses and Workers* - [Support will be increased \(link is external\)](#) through the existing Job Support and self-employed schemes, and expanding business grants to support companies in high-alert level areas.
- *Job Support Scheme (JSS)* - reducing the employer contribution to those unworked hours to just 5%, reducing the minimum hours requirements to 20%, so those working just one day a week will be eligible. Employers will continue to receive the £1,000 Job Retention Bonus.
- *Self-employed Grant* - increasing the amount of profits covered by the two forthcoming self-employed grants from 20% to 40%
- *Business Grants* - cash grants of up to £2,100 per month primarily for businesses in the hospitality, accommodation and leisure sector



Dorset Skills Board

Dorset Investment Prospectus Skills overview

Update

- The Dorset LEP and partners are developing a 10 year Investment Prospectus with a focus on the Dorset Local Industrial Strategy (and aligned draft Dorset Skills Plan) priorities plus economic recovery/rebuilding linked to COVID-19. The vision is centred around “***Dorset: Living Better***”
- As well as headline priorities within the Prospectus, an initial Investment Portfolio will also be developed.
- A proforma process has been live for the last 2 months (closed last week). Over 40 good quality returns (public and private-led).
- A review of all information is currently underway. The Prospectus is still on track to be ready (*Edition #1*) by January 2021.

'Skills'

The Prospectus groups a range of themes across 5 headline programmes:

Enabling business
Dorset lifestyle
Inspired thinking
Naturally creative
Role modelling recovery

These align well with the skills priorities of:

Taskforce for Recovery pan-Dorset with a lead for economic recovery, upskilling and retraining/Role modelling recovery
Place based regeneration, scale and focus pan-Dorset/Lifestyle & recovery
Future Growth talent and attraction including innovation and enterprise/business & inspired thinking

Emerging investment portfolio - skills

- The proforma responses ranged from early development stage to imminent delivery/capital and revenue
- There was a particularly strong response from business on skills and employment initiatives (not always themed as 'skills' per se)
- There was a good spread across the whole Dorset area
- Overall strong level of ambition (*and great alignment with LEP vision which has had good feedback*)
- It is clear that the investment ideas will benefit from the strategic leadership of the Dorset Skills Board (and all respondents welcomed that approach).
 - Aligning with the current skills plan and evidence base
 - Identifying economies of scale and improved delivery through a truly collaborative partnership approach
 - Linking demand (business) and supply (skills leaders) in Dorset

The background is a dark, blurred image of a pen writing on a document. A line graph is visible, with a peak and a trough. Numbers like '2.5' and '2.47' are scattered on the page. The overall tone is professional and analytical.

Headlines

Dorset Investment Prospectus: Emerging skills portfolio

Skills portfolio – proforma summary

Taskforce 4 recovery

Digital skills

Health & care workforce

Food, drink and hospitality

Place-based regeneration

Weymouth & Portland

Boscombe

Rural

Future growth talent & attraction

Marine
(whole cluster inc. mariculture)

Environment (green & blue)

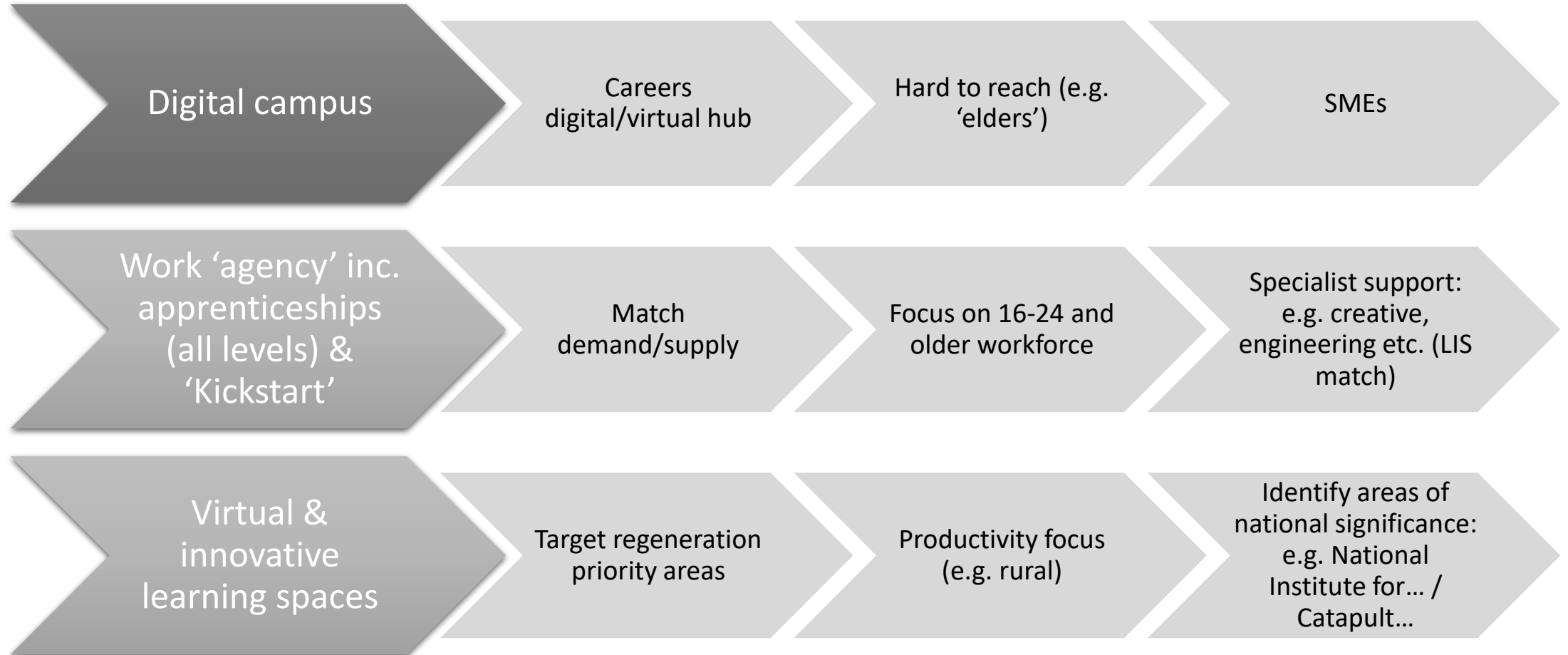
Advanced manufacturing & engineering
(inc. robotics)

Creative tech & design

Construction (MMC)

(NB: these are grouped in themes rather than individual investment ideas per se)

Skills delivery mechanisms (headlines from *SAPB 10/20*)



Evidence analysis headlines – 'big issues' (CV-19)

- Demand-led rapid retraining/reskilling programme (potential to target worst hit areas)
- Target 16 – 24 year olds
- Identify bespoke support to self-employed (e.g. local procurement, supply chain network growth, 'buy local' etc).
- Identify support for business - outcome increase vacancies (e.g. Dorset co-ordination of Kickstart for micro and SMEs)
- Align local response to national response for 'seamless' approach

Overall analysis headlines

- LIS: Demographic impact leading to replacement demand issue (those leaving workforce to retire are relatively well-qualified/skilled).
- Hard to fill vacancies are marked in Dorset
- Skills levels fluctuate – with lowest skilled in areas of relative deprivation
- Graduates and highly skilled - leaving the area/low numbers coming into the area
- COVID-19: Significant exposure in key industries: *Hospitality & leisure, manufacturing, construction, arts/creative, tourism.*
- High % self-employment (and unable to access support in last 6 months).

Recommended next steps

- Skills Board to take strategic leadership for development of Investment Prospectus skills portfolio in 2021+
 - Commission activity where required (e.g. independent demand assessments)
 - Frame new programmes (e.g. Shared Prosperity Fund)
 - = ***Strategic/collaborative approach to skills delivery***
 - Convene a 'task & finish group' to review prioritised proformas (post independent assessment and LEP Board sign-off – 26/11)
 - Collaboration with investment sponsors where appropriate (demand-led opportunities) – short, medium and longer term activity
 - Align to evidence analysis.
 - Align to delivery mechanisms previously identified.
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