

Appendix 1: Dorset Skills Commission – Terms of reference

1. Purpose

- 1.1. **The Dorset Skills Commission** (referred to as the 'Commission' hereafter) will be established as a time-limited, high-level Commission to oversee an effective and at pace response to achieve a jobs-led approach to COVID-19 economic recovery. It will also provide an objective and independent review of the future Dorset Skills landscape, helping to shape a *world-class* skills and learning infrastructure for all communities.
- 1.2. The Commission will bring together senior representatives from industry, education and public life. It will be led by research and an evidence base from industry and global academic research reports and local information. The Commission will ultimately report to the Cabinets of the Dorset Unitary Councils (Dorset and BCP) and the Dorset LEP Board.
- 1.3. The aims of the Commission are:
 - 1.3.1. To oversee an effective Dorset post-COVID skills and jobs 'at pace' **response early 2022.**
 - 1.3.2. To undertake a review into the Dorset skills landscape – with a particular consideration of the National Skills White Paper producing a report that lays out a potential skills journey and opportunities/needs based on 10-, 20- and 30-years trajectories **To report findings by 30 September 2022.**
 - 1.3.3. To work closely with the Dorset Skills Board and Panel to support immediate implementation of the wider skills priorities within the Dorset Skills Plan and Dorset Investment Prospectus, and **to ensure an effective handover at the end of the Commission's lifetime in 2022.**

2. Status

- 2.1. The Commission is established as an independent Board, not a Committee or Joint Committee and therefore only has advisory powers, not decision-making ones.
- 2.2. Ultimately the Commission will report to the Cabinets of the Dorset Unitary Councils (Dorset and BCP) and the Dorset LEP Board.
- 2.3. All business of the Commission will be conducted in accordance with the Nolan Principles of Public Life (see Appendix 1).

3. Commission membership and structure

- 3.1. The Commission membership is by appointment and drawn from senior and respected individuals from within and external to Dorset. Members have been chosen for their independence and objectivity, as well as understanding of the skills agenda in Dorset, the UK and beyond.
- 3.2. An agenda item of an early meeting will review and finalise the governance structure and membership.
- 3.3. Where required the Commission may co-opt relevant specialists or organisational representatives to serve as members or advisors if there is a clear requirement for additional expertise and experience.
- 3.4. A chair will be appointed jointly by the Dorset Unitary Councils and the Dorset LEP.

4. Core focus

- 4.1. To oversee an effective Dorset post-COVID skills and jobs 'at pace' response early in 2022. Work will be delivered by key agencies and organisations in Dorset – the role of the Commission is to:
 - 4.1.1. Ensure that activity is targeted for most impact.
 - 4.1.2. To unblock issues which are preventing pace or innovation in delivery
 - 4.1.3. To oversee performance of the Dorset-wide response
- 4.2. To undertake a review into the Dorset skills landscape – with a particular consideration of the recent National Skills White Paper – to identify an optimum solution for Dorset's current and future skills opportunities/needs based on 10-, 20- and 30-years trajectories. Core focus on the following:
 - 4.2.1. To assess the optimum solution for delivery of Further Education across Dorset
 - 4.2.2. Develop a strong dialogue with business and industry to future proof emerging markets and talent gaps
 - 4.2.3. To investigate and, potentially, to propose the most effective framework for negotiation of an Adult Skills Devolution Deal with Central Government
 - 4.2.4. To report findings by 30 September 2022
- 4.3. To work closely with the Dorset Skills Board and Panel to support immediate implementation of the wider skills priorities within the Dorset Skills Plan and Dorset Investment Prospectus.
 - 4.3.1. Ensuring alignment with the skills landscape review and local partner priorities as appropriate
 - 4.3.2. Ensuring alignment with the post-COVID response
 - 4.3.3. Offering advice and expertise to drive innovation and future-facing solutions for skills needs and opportunities over the next 10 years in Dorset.
 - 4.3.4. Undertake a comprehensive handover to the Dorset Skills Board and Panel at the end of the Commission's lifetime.

5. Representation and attendance

- 5.1. Commission members are expected to attend not less than 75% of meetings.
- 5.2. Commission members are appointed for their individual expertise and insight – and rigorous approach to independence and objectivity.
- 5.3. Deputies shall not attend Commission meetings.

6. Decisions

- 6.1. The Commission shall operate on the basis of consensus.
- 6.2. In the event that a consensus cannot be achieved on a matter requiring decision, that decision shall be taken by vote and carried if it is supported by over 50% of those present.
- 6.3. In the event of a tied decision, the Chair of the meeting will cast the deciding vote.
- 6.4. There should be a quorum of TBC members.
- 6.5. There will be no Written Procedure decisions.

7. Meetings and papers

- 7.1. Commission meetings shall initially be held on TBC basis. A calendar of future meetings and enquiry days will be established early in the Commission's time, although the minimum notice required for a meeting is two weeks, to ensure that all members are afforded the opportunity to attend.
- 7.2. The agenda and papers for meetings shall be approved by the Chair and issued at least five working days in advance of the meeting by the Secretariat (Dorset LEP).
- 7.3. Meeting minutes shall be approved in draft form by the Chair and disseminated to members no later than ten working days following the meeting. Minutes shall remain in draft until approval by the Commission at the next meeting.
- 7.4. Minutes shall be made publicly available on the Dorset LEP website. Minutes will be redacted where they contain personal information about individuals or commercially sensitive data or for good legal reason.

8. Conflicts of interest

- 8.1. The Commission shall ensure that all conflicts of interest are fully disclosed.
- 8.2. The Secretariat shall maintain a Register of Members' Interests and publish these on the Dorset LEP website. Members shall supply information to the Secretariat for inclusion in the register, or a nil return, on joining the Commission, in response to any request for an update and on becoming aware of any new interest. The Secretariat will circulate a request for information about interests annually.
- 8.3. Should a member's interests change, s/he shall inform the Secretariat at the earliest opportunity.
- 8.4. Should an issue be discussed by the Commission which presents a conflict of interest to a member, the member shall declare the conflict of interest, regardless of whether s/he has previously declared the interest in the Register of Members' Interests. Such declarations shall be minuted.
- 8.5. Members shall not vote or participate in discussions on any issues on which they have registered an interest

9. Review

- 9.1. The Commission shall arrange for periodic reviews of its own performance and review its terms of reference to ensure it is operating at maximum effectiveness.

Appendix 1

Principles of Conduct in Public Life

Selflessness

Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.

Integrity

Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.

Objectivity

Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

Accountability

Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

Openness

Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

Honesty

Holders of public office should be truthful.

Leadership

Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.