

ECabinet

5 December 2023

Dorset Shared Prosperity Fund Investment Plan

Appendix 2:

Shared Prosperity Fund Investment Plan, Rural England Prosperity Fund Addendum summaries and original texts

1. Equalities Impact Assessment

1.1 A comprehensive over-arching Equalities Impact Assessment was carried out to support the Economic Growth Strategy, available at [Economic Growth Strategy EqIA - Dorset Council](#) and reproduced below. A more detailed EqIA examining the potential impact of specific SPF Interventions is under development, in consultation with a nominated DC Inclusion Champion.

1.2 Economic Growth Strategy EQIA:

Aims of the Strategy

The Dorset Council Economic Growth Strategy (EGS) sets out our ambitions to enable clean, inclusive, sustainable and good quality economic growth across the whole council area. Thereby bringing improved standards of living, quality of life, health and wellbeing for all of Dorset's residents, ensuring we have great places to live, work and visit.

This EGS presents the council's priorities to:

- enhance Dorset as a place to do business and attract inward investment
- support the creation and growth of new sustainable business and in turn support job creation
- improve transport and digital connectivity across the area
- enhance aspirations and skills to improve social mobility

The strategy intends to bring a positive benefit to all the protected characteristics including Dorset Council area characteristics, however, until the action plan is developed and implemented, we are unclear what the actual outcomes will be for the different protected characteristic groups. Therefore, when assessing the impact of

this strategy we have do not have enough information to make an informed decision and therefore have suggested it is unclear.

Context to the proposal

The EGS sets out the key economic growth priorities and actions for the council. Before the creation of Dorset Council in April 2019, each district council and Dorset County Council had their own economic growth strategies.

Intelligence and communication

Data, information, evidence and research used and how it has influenced the decision-making process

The principal source of data used to inform both the EGS and EqIA is [Dorset Insight](#) which presents a broad spectrum of data drawn from a wide range of published sources. The data reports reviewed for this EqIA were:

- population
- economic deprivation
- economic Inclusion
- the overall State of Dorset report

Data we already have about service users, or those the proposal will have an impact on

The Dorset Insight reports covering the Dorset Council area highlighted:

- the proportion of the population of working age is in decline, whilst 65+ is in steady growth
- the Dorset Council area overall has a high rate of economically active residents and a low unemployment rate
- average weekly earnings are below the south west average
- Weymouth and Portland contains communities with nationally very high levels of deprivation including employment and income as shown on the index of multiple deprivation (IMD)

- the proportion of workers in Dorset with Level 4+ skills (e.g. Higher National Certificate - HNC) is lower than the south west average despite demand increasing for higher skills to fill jobs
- the proportion of businesses finding it hard to find skilled employees is rising
- workers and learners in rural areas find it hard to use public transport due to availability and cost

Engagement or consultation that has taken place as part of this EqIA

Dorset Council ran 6 events targeting business owners and managers. The events were promoted using social media, Dorset Council's business and economy newsletter and via business groups and support organisations.

The events were held at the following locations during November/ December 2019:

- Sturminster Newton
- Wareham
- Dorchester
- Weymouth
- Bridport
- Wimborne

Voting handsets were used at these meetings to gather immediate feedback on a range of topics. Approximately 140 delegates voted on a range of questions relating to the local economy.

Individuals, businesses and organisations who were unable to attend the event were offered an online survey which was also open from December to February. The survey was promoted using social media, Dorset Council's business and economy newsletter and via business groups and support organisations. The survey was completed by 12 business owners, 2 employees on behalf of a business and 14 others (councillor, resident or organisation).

Feedback

The EGS will be made available on Dorset Council's website with hard copies accessible at council offices. It will be promoted via social media, Dorset Council's business and economy newsletter and via business groups and support organisations.

Assessment

Impacts of the strategy

impacts

Impacts on who or what	Effect	Details
Age	<p><u>Positive effect</u></p> <p>on all ages but particularly young people approaching or entering the workforce</p>	<p>The action plan will include the following activity:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • enable information, advice and guidance and deliver inspirational events to inform young people, parents and carers of local opportunities and progression paths • raise young people's aspirations and develop links between schools and business

- secure resources to prevent and reduce 16 and 17 year olds Not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) or jobs without training
- deliver the council's commitment to developing young people's employability skills and careers plans
- raise skills levels, especially priority sectors, including enhanced provision of further and higher education
- facilitate a Dorset Apprenticeship Strategy with a focus on increasing starts, focusing on higher and degree level apprenticeships
- deliver the council's own workforce Apprenticeship Strategy and work with partners to deliver it

Positive

The Strategy includes action specifically designed to address rural isolation including:

Rural isolation

- enable economic growth in the Southern Dorset Corridor (aka Jurassic Corridor) to improve social mobility, reduce commuting and increase productivity
- enable economic growth in the Northern Growth Area to ensure balanced growth of housing and employment opportunities
- supporting the development of the 'blue and green' economies, realising the environmental assets and addressing rural remoteness and disadvantage
- deliver the 5G Rural Dorset testbed and trial programme
- maintain current bus and rail services provision including access to education

Positive

One of the aims of the EGS is to enhance aspirations and skills to improve social mobility. A range of actions focussed on supporting young people has been identified (as shown in 'Age' above). In addition, support will be provided for economic growth priority areas (Jurassic Corridor and Northern Growth Area) and low pay sectors (e.g. the care sector).

Poverty (social and economic deprivation)

Disability / gender reassignment and gender identity / pregnancy and maternity / race and ethnicity

Unclear

The EGS includes skills, training and business engagement and communications activity intended to raise awareness of the needs of this group,

/ religion or belief / sexual orientation / sex / marriage or civil partnership / carers / single parent families

current legislation, key issues and areas for improvement through, for example, the use of case studies. Further details will be provided through the action plan.

Unclear

Military families/veterans

The EGS includes skills, training and business engagement and communications activity intended to raise awareness of the needs of this group, current legislation, key issues and areas for improvement through, for example, the use of case studies. Further detail will be provided through the action plan.

Dorset Council promotes the Armed Forces Covenant to ensure all members of the armed forces community are treated fairly.

Key

Type of impact

Description

Positive impact

- positive impact on a large proportion of protected characteristic groups
- significant positive impact on a small proportion of protect characteristics group

Negative impact

- disproportionate impact on a large proportion of protected characteristic groups
- significant disproportionate impact on a small proportion of protected characteristic groups

Neutral impact

- no change/ no assessed significant impact of protected characteristic groups

Unclear

- not enough data/evidence has been collected to make an informed decision

EqlA sign off

Sign off table

Officer completing this EqlA:

Tim Brown

Date: 24 July 2020

Equality Lead:

Susan Ward-Rice

Date: 26 August 2020

Equality and Diversity Action Group Chair:

Dr David Bonner

Date: 26 August 2020

