

## Heart of the South West Local Enterprise Partnership LEP Board Paper 9 b)

**Report title:** People Leadership Group / Skills Advisory Panel Update

**Date:** 28 June 2022

**Purpose:** This paper is for noting

**Link to LIS:**

Inclusive Growth			Clean growth	
Energy		Engineering		Digital
Ideas/ Innovation	People/Skills	Infrastructure	Bus. Environment	Places

**Timing:**

**Financial Impact:** None

**Decisions requested:** None

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### 1) Current Market Position – extracts from Heart of the South West Employment and Skills Review June 2022 (distributed)

- 1.1 The South West of England has recovered to above pre-pandemic levels of workforce jobs. Within these regional figures, growth has mainly been driven by employee jobs. Self-employment has seen a small bounce between December 2021 and March 2022: the number of self-employment jobs increased by 87,000, bringing it above pre-pandemic levels for the first time. Meanwhile, the number of employee jobs continues to increase: over the same time period, employee jobs increased by 302,000. This is part of a consistent trend from December 2020.
- 1.2 Between January and March 2022, job vacancies exceeded unemployment for the first time since records began, combining the lowest unemployment rate for nearly 50 years with an unprecedented spike in vacancy growth.

- 1.3 Demand remains high for health and social care staff, a local and national skills shortage that existed before the pandemic, Office and Administrative Assistant demand has recovered since the heart of the pandemic. Demand for software developers has increased compared to 2020 but has been outpaced by growth in other sectors. Most of the highest demand roles have remained consistent across the past three years.
- 1.4 Compared to 2020, economic inactivity rates have increased across all age groups except those aged 20-24 and over 65. The largest percentage increases were in 35–49-year-olds, closely followed (within a percentage point) by 50–64-year-olds. The largest numerical increase was 17,300 among 50–64-year-olds, at almost three times the increase of 5,800 among 35–49-year-olds. The number of those economically inactive not wanting a job locally has risen by 24% over the past year, a negligible difference from the comparison of October 2020 to September 2021 with the previous year. The increase in total inactivity was fastest in Devon, with an increase of nearly 5 percentage points of rate compared to the LEP average increase of 2.6 percentage points and UK average of 0.6. Torbay saw a decrease in inactivity of 0.6 points.
- 1.5 More widely, the last quarter has seen
- submission of LSIP Expression of Interests from Devon and Somerset Chambers
  - Devon County Council, Torbay and Plymouth continue work on the County Deal with its impact on the Skills landscape. Development of the Skills strand taking place through consultation during June / July 2022.
  - Submission of the SDF supporting capital and programme delivery by the FE colleges and DCTPN
  - Submission of plans for Multiply by Devon, Torbay, Plymouth, and Somerset Councils supporting maths provision
  - Development of the UKSPF Shared Prosperity Funds by District / City Councils, Unitary Authorities and Somerset County Council supporting work in communities and business with a discreet skills provision starting in 2024-2025.

## 2) Progress on Programme

- 2.1 Members of the LEP's People Team have focused heavily over the past three months on both working with partners on the LEPs existing programmes, but also contributing to departmental and partner activity around responding and supporting the labour market. Core programmes include:
- **Skills Advisory Panel** – The Skills Advisory Panel has met, with the revised brief and funding priorities to Produce - and make available robust analysis of skills needs and the local labour market and to - Work collaboratively with the ERB (once designated) in the development of an LSIP for the area. UofE will continue to support in meeting these objectives.

- **Digital Skills Partnership**

**DfE Bootcamp / 'Training4All' Programme** – Wave 1 and Wave 2 Skills Bootcamp position: £3.5m+ funding secured from DfE for Technical and Digital Skills Bootcamps across Cornwall, Devon, Somerset and Dorset for 1500 adult placements realising 1,000 Learner completes and 20 % into new roles. Wave Three - Cornwall and Devon (+ Somerset and Dorset) - £1.8m for 2022-23 with the opportunity to extend – contract is One year, plus 2 year contract subject to performance - Widened sector focus to include Digital, Technical, Construction, Green plus 10% pilot for Creative Industries, Professional Services, Tourism & Healthcare - Target 700 learners

**The Digital Course Finder - Digital Course Finder** has now launched - encouraging all Training Providers to either update or submit the digital skills course info.

**Digital Maturity Index** due to go live this summer

The **DCTPN and DSP Community Renewal Fund project** [digitaldevon.org.uk](https://digitaldevon.org.uk) is up and running until the end of December. Stands include [Train the Trainer course](#) / free [Microsoft Learning pathways](#). / Community Learning into community events or groups so please connect us. This project is also gifting tablets or laptops to individuals to help them get online.

for full level of activity see Digital report.

- **Careers Hub** – Careers Hub continues with successful delivery. Agreement gained across partnerships to continue to fund and deliver activity through to September 2023. Further consideration underway to consider impact of County Deal and work underway to identify Greater Devon and Somerset split.
- **RESTART Programme** – Worth over £100m in the HotSW over the next 3 years, the LEP People team has been working closely with SEETEC-PLUSS on the roll out of JCP's Restart Programme since its announcement in late May. The programme, which will support those who have been unemployed for 12 months or longer, includes provision to work in a more tailored way with clients, including one to one provision and skills and training tailoring.

2.2 In addition to the above core activities, work has continued throughout the past three months with JCP, college partners, university partners and wider contractors across national and EU funded provision to support worklessness, employability retraining and sector development. Key activity has included discussions and initial work around additional engineering, health and retrofit and green industries opportunities; and ongoing engagement with both Training Provider Networks around their forward plans and member investments / bids.