



Report to the Partnership for Urban South Hampshire Joint Committee

Date: **6 October 2011**

Report of: **Debra Humphris and Anne-Marie Mountifield**

Subject: **Employment and Skills Board (ESB) Annual Report**

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to update the Joint Committee on the work of the Employment and Skills Board and to seek endorsement for the publication of their first annual report.

RECOMMENDATION

It is RECOMMENDED that the Joint Committee:

1. NOTES the annual report as contained in Appendix A, and
2. ENDORSES the attached report and APPROVE it for publication.

INTRODUCTION

1. The Employment and Skills Board (ESB) has been established with an independent chairman to deliver joined-up working, comprising seven private sector members drawn from some of the largest employers in the Solent area including Pall Europe UK, BAE Systems, EADS Astrium and De Vere Hotels, together with representatives from the wider public sector. An action plan provides a clear focus for engaging with and supporting sectors where the area has a clear advantage regionally, nationally and globally including marine, aerospace and environmental technologies. This includes:
 - **Establishing a significant advanced manufacturing and engineering training function** to support the skills needs of the growth hub and sector clusters;
 - **Establishing an employer-led Apprenticeship Training Agency** with a focus on priority sectors, and in particular, small to medium sized businesses (SME's), providing a flexible demand-led approach to the employment of apprentices;
 - **Strengthening local business partnerships between employers and HEIs, further education and schools** focused on priority sectors in the area;
 - **Promoting Graduate Retention from our four universities** in the region will place a strong emphasis on growing internship programmes, work placements and curriculum reform in Higher Education in partnership with employers;
 - **Aligning single work programmes** to provide route ways into sustainable employment for those currently not engaged in the labour market; and
 - **Creating opportunities for residents to access jobs in sectors that underpin employment growth**, such as financial and business services, the health and care sector, retail and the visitor economy.
2. Attached in Appendix A is the first annual report of the ESB, which documents the delivery of actions to support the action plan agreed following the adoption of the PUSH ED strategy in November 2010, and the approval of the Solent Local Enterprise Partnership in October 2010. This has been considered and endorsed by both the ESB and the PUSH Economic Development Panel.
3. Following the completion of the Annual report the Board has acknowledged that during the past year a great deal has changed both in the policy and funding environment being established by the Coalition Government and in the local strategic context. In particular, the business led Solent Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) has been formed to take

responsibility for delivery of economic development in the Solent area, building on the firm foundations established by PUSH.

4. Employment and skills will remain a key consideration for the economy and the Solent LEP has committed to:
 - Create wealth through business growth by connecting business to people, expertise, finance and networks, and in addition to current forecasts, create 10,000 new jobs in the Solent LEP area; and
 - Drive regeneration of the urban areas and develop new ways of reinvigorating cities and areas of deprivation, thereby reducing benefit dependency. Solent LEP will play a role in identifying and driving forward skills development so that economic growth is not held back by skill shortages in the Solent LEP area thereby increasing employment rates to 75.9% from the current predicted level of 72.7%.
5. The ESB will continue to provide a strong and well established vehicle for local authorities and other partners (including the LEP) to work together/collaborate on joint strategy and policy development for employment and skills. Such joint working builds on the strong track record we have already established in this regard and our terms of reference and priorities going forward will be based on:
 - Providing leadership and co-ordination for the Solent area on employment and skills;
 - Strengthening education business links from school to adult learning;
 - Improving the work readiness of young people and adults; and
 - Simplifying the employment and skills system to make it easier for employers and learners to engage.
6. In keeping with the commitment of the ESB to support the development and retention of the talents of people to work within their local economy, the Board, in partnership with the University of Southampton has established an internship opportunity for a graduate to support the work of the Board and the delivery of its action plan. This post was advertised during June 2011 and Hannah Saunders, a Law Graduate, has secured the one year internship, which commenced on 19 September 2011.

Recommendation:

It is RECOMMENDED that the Joint Committee:

1. NOTES the annual report as contained in Appendix A, and
2. ENDORSES the attached report and APPROVE it for publication.

Appendix A: [annual report](#)

Enquiries:

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