

Solent Local Enterprise Partnership Newsletter – Issue 7

26th September, 2011



Launch Event Update

The Solent LEP held their official launch event on Tuesday 26th July, 2011. Over 300 delegates filled the City Cruise Terminal venue to capacity. Businesses from large multinationals to sole traders and new start-ups were asked to share their key priorities during the launch conference held by the Solent LEP. The event, organised by the Solent LEP in partnership with Hampshire Chamber of Commerce, provided an opportunity for representatives from business, education and the public sector in the Solent to provide insight and direction for the Solent LEP.



Doug Morrison, LEP Chairman, and key note speaker David Dingle CBE, CEO of Carnival UK, addressing the packed City Cruise Terminal at the Solent LEP Launch Event.

Delegates heard key note speeches from David Dingle CBE, CEO of Carnival UK, and Doug Morrison, Solent LEP Chairman, who remains committed to ensuring that the LEP continues to listen to its members. The initial

consultation session, held at the launch event, allowed attendees to submit views on the LEPs priority areas and the Solent economy.

Initial feedback suggests that businesses in the Solent remain confident about economic prospects going forward, with 60% of participants expecting their business to grow either marginally or significantly over the next two to three years. In relation to key areas of work the following were seen as the most important:

- **Investing in skills to enable higher levels of employment.**
- **Supporting enterprise, new business starts and business survival.**
- **Focusing on infrastructure priorities.**

Key enablers for growth were identified:

- **Getting people with the right skills.**
- **Improvements in infrastructure.**
- **Links to sources of innovation and new ideas.**

Barriers to growth which the LEP will need to work to reduce were clearly articulated as:

- **Labour market issues.**
- **Difficulties in accessing finance.**
- **Transport issues.**

A more detailed analysis of responses to the consultation can be found at:

www.solentlep.org.uk/Consultation_Results.pdf

Delegates were also given the opportunity to meet with the LEP board to discuss the Solent economy.

As well as the consultation feedback, the LEP received a lot of interest from the local business community; both on the day and after the event. The Solent LEP is gaining momentum, with the number of organisations expressing an interest in joining approaching 100 and counting. As LEP interest grows, so too does our capacity to deliver on our ambitious economic goals for the Solent.

For further information on how to become involved, visit: www.solentlep.org.uk or email info@solentlep.org.uk



The Solent LEP Board taking questions at the launch event

Investing in Skills with Solent Apprentices for Business

The LEP has already begun to address one key enabler for growth: *getting people with the right skills*. LEP board member Chris Allington launched the Solent Apprentices For Business training agency at the event.



Chris Allington launching Solent Apprentices For Business

Apprentices for Business makes employing an apprentice quick, simple and efficient because it offers a 'one-stop-Apprenticeship shop' for Solent employers and will:

- Work with you to identify jobs roles and job descriptions that are suitable for Apprenticeships
- Advertise and market your Apprenticeship job vacancies to attract the most suitable candidate
- Skills match, screen and prepare a short list of candidates for you to interview
- Arrange for your Apprentice to be trained with a high quality approved training provider with minimal disruption to the working week
- Employ the Apprentice on your behalf using Solent A4Bs 'hosting model'
- Handle all payroll and HR functions, invoicing you for the hours the apprentice works
- Mentor your Apprentices to make sure they fulfil their potential and add value to your organisation

During the Launch employers and training providers gave us examples of how they are working with the LEP to increase Apprenticeships. Delegates also heard from three impressive young Solent residents who wanted to become Apprentices: **Holly** wanted to work in an office environment – she's now employed by Huber Dixon as a business administrator; **Craig** wanted to work in IT and now has an interview at Critical Software; **Sarah** wanted to be an administrator and is now employed in the Personnel Department of Fareham Borough Council.

In the Solent we are lucky to be able to draw on a local pool of talented young people who want the opportunity to train and get the skills they need to help you and your business grow. That's what Solent Apprentices for Business is here to help you do. In order to ensure this success continues, we need more local employers to take up the opportunity and get in touch with us so that we can get working for you. More information on the apprenticeship agency can be found at: www.solenta4b.co.uk

Solent Enterprise Zone

On Wednesday 17th August, Government announced 11 new enterprise zones to be set up across the country. Daedalus Airfield on the Gosport Peninsular was named as one of the second wave of enterprise zones and, with this announcement, Chancellor George Osborne has positioned Gosport and the wider Solent area at the heart of the national drive for economic growth.



The new Enterprise Zone is ready for lift off - From left to right: Gosport MP Caroline Dineage, LEP Board Member Russell Kew, Captain Mike Burns of local business Atlas Helicopters Ltd, Minister of State for Business and Innovation Mark Prisk MP and Leader of Gosport Council Mark Hook

The awarding of the enterprise zone at Daedalus is the biggest success for the Solent LEP to date and is one of just 22 Enterprise Zones across the country.

The Solent LEP plan to create a world class centre for advanced manufacturing and innovation at the site, with a focus on the marine and aerospace sectors to build on the existing strengths of the Solent economy. The Solent LEP is off to a flying start in this respect, with a number of successful businesses already based on the airfield.

A more detailed briefing on the many benefits associated with the Enterprise Zone will be provided shortly. These include; 100% business rate discount worth up to £275,000 over five years, a simplified planning regime for development and provision of superfast broadband.

A register of interest in the enterprise zone and temporary email address has now been

established. If you would like to receive further updates as the LEP board work with government to finalise plans for the zone, please use the contact form available at:

www.invest-in-southampton.co.uk/contact/contactus.asp

UK Trade & Investment

On Monday 19th September, the Solent Local Enterprise Partnership signed an agreement with UK Trade and Investment (UKTI) making the LEP the official government body responsible for co-ordinating inward investment locally.

The signing, which took place at the internationally renowned Southampton Boat Show, represents a landmark for the LEP as they indicated their intent to ensure a high level of inward investment to the Solent.

Ernie Battey, Executive Chairman of Morgan Sindall Investments Ltd, signed the document on behalf of the Solent LEP, with Minister of State for Business and Enterprise Mark Prisk MP signing for UKTI.



From left to right: Back row - Cllr Royston Smith (Solent LEP), Jan Ward (Inward Investment Board), Mark O'Connell (UKTI), Stuart Hill (Solent LEP), Chris Allington (Solent LEP), Bernie Topham (Inward Investment Board). Front row: Mark Prisk MP, Ernie Battey (Solent LEP).

At the signing, Business Minister Mark Prisk said: "The Solent is an important area for the nation in targeting inward investment. The recently announced Solent Enterprise Zone will make the area particularly attractive to foreign investors, especially those in the Aerospace and Marine sectors. I expect the Solent to become one of the strongest areas in the UKTI national portfolio."

Collaborate 2 Innovate

On November 1st, 2011, the Solent LEP will be supporting this year's Collaborate2Innovate event. The event will take place at Holiday Inn, Telegraph Way, Morn Hill, Winchester, SO21 1HZ. If you are a director or manager of a business of any size, particularly those seeking to achieve growth through collaboration,

innovation or internationally, then this event is for you. The day will include keynotes from high profile experts, a session with the Solent LEP board, 1:1 networking opportunities and individual sessions such as:

- Growing business internationally
- Technological Collaboration
- Business funding
- Marketing communications
- Building your team for success
- Workplace & the impact of cloud computing

For more information and to register to attend, please visit:

www.collaborate2innovate2011.co.uk

Solent LEP Start-Up Fund Bid

The Solent LEP were successful in their bid for £95,000 from the LEP Start-Up Fund. The funding is designed to help LEPs establish their operational capacity and the Solent LEP has already taken advantage of this opportunity to establish an office space. This means you can now write to us at:

Solent LEP Office
Portsmouth City Council
Floor 2, Core 3
Civic Offices
Guildhall Square
Portsmouth
PO1 2AY

You can also call us on: **02392 688 924**

The Solent LEP website and email address remains:

www.solentlep.org.uk
info@solentlep.org.uk

However, a new site is being developed and is expected to launch shortly. Further updates on this will follow.

Coming soon

In coming issues of the Solent LEP newsletter, we plan to bring you:

- News on an event specifically designed for SMEs.
- News on a networking event for members at Westminster with MPs, Ministers and representatives from key government departments.
- News on the Regional Growth Fund bid submitted by the Solent LEP in partnership with **The News** as well as news on the five other bids which the Solent LEP supported from the region.

For further information please visit:
www.solentlep.org.uk