



SOLENT  
**LOCAL**  
ENTERPRISE  
**PARTNERSHIP**

**Solent Local Enterprise Partnership  
Solent Growth Forum  
Initial Working Draft Terms of Reference  
November 2014**

## 1. Effect and application

The Solent LEP Board in partnership with its accountable body, Portsmouth City Council, establishes the Solent Growth Forum (SGF), and with the participant members adopts these Terms of Reference, which will govern the meetings and activities of the SGF.

## 2. Background and purpose

The Solent Local Enterprise Partnership (Solent LEP) is the key interface and lead for economic development in the Solent, and has recently published its [Strategic Economic Plan](#) (SEP). The SEP aims to focus investment on those parts of the economy that need to develop or change the most to accelerate growth.

The SEP targets six strategic priorities:

- Supporting new businesses, **enterprise** and ensuring Small and Medium Sized Enterprise (SME) survival and growth.
- Enabling **infrastructure** priorities including land assets, transport and housing, reducing flood risk and improving access to superfast broadband.
- Establishing a single **inward investment** model to encourage companies to open new sites in the region, supported by effective marketing.
- Investing in **skills** to establish a sustainable pattern of growth, ensuring local residents are equipped to take up the jobs that are created and businesses can source local skills and labour to underpin growth.
- Developing **strategic sectors** and clusters (interconnected groups and businesses) of marine, aerospace and defence, advanced manufacturing, engineering, transport and logistics businesses, low carbon and the visitor economy – establishing the area as a business gateway, at both local and international levels and developing local supply chains.
- Building on our substantial knowledge assets to support **innovation** and build innovative capacity in the Solent area to stimulate growth in Solent businesses and in new high growth sectors, particularly linked to our Higher Education sector excellence.

The Local Growth Deal sets out a range of priority interventions aimed at responding to the challenges and opportunities identified by the SEP. Performance will be monitored against a set of stretching targets, which we aim to achieve by 2020:

- In addition to current forecasts, create an additional 15,500 new jobs in the Solent LEP area;
- Achieve GVA growth of 3%;
- Increase GVA per job by an additional £6,879 per job;
- Improve productivity (GDP per head) closer to the South East average;
- Increase employment rates to 80% from the current 78% and improve economic activity rates from 80% to 81%;
- Enable the delivery of 24,000 new homes;
- Raise the business birth rate from 3.6% to 4.1% (and create 1000 new businesses);
- Improve the business survival rate from 61.4% to 62.5%;
- Raise the proportion of the population with Level 4 and above skills to 36% of the working age population from the current 32%;
- Support the raising of education attainment rates to above the UK average; and
- Increase inward investment into Solent attracting at least 5% of FDI projects entering the UK.

## 3. Solent LEP and the Accountable Body

The Solent LEP has a vital leadership role to play, responsible for developing and maintaining the Strategic Economic Plan and determining the key funding priorities to which LGF and other resources should be directed, and ensuring there

is adequate capacity to deliver against these. Democratic accountability for the decisions made by the LEP are provided through local authority leader representation, with accountability to the business community flowing through the business leaders. As not all local authorities are represented directly on the Solent LEP Board, it is important that all Local Authority representatives have been given a mandate through the Solent Growth Forum, which brings all the local authorities together in the area.

The Accountable Local Authority for the Solent LEP (Portsmouth City Council), as the legal recipient of funding, will take responsibility for ensuring that a local assurance framework is in place, that it meets the standards set out in this document, and that all funding decisions are made in accordance with it.

### **Purpose of the SGF**

Government want to be confident that there are strong underpinning local authority partnership arrangements in place to facilitate joint decision making and collaboration on growth and economic development between all local authorities in each LEP area. It's important that local authorities across the LEP area support growth priorities and actively play a part in ensuring their delivery – by aligning strategic plans, through use of their powers and competencies and through pooling and aligning of local resources and efforts.

In order to provide for this, the Solent Growth Forum will be hosted by PUSH under a Joint Agreement that will seek to develop an arrangement which enables collective engagement of local authority leaders in decision-making on growth priorities, with the LEP represented, supported by strong collaboration and joint delivery at executive level.

The SGF has the following purposes:

- to review projects funded under the Solent Growth Deal
- to provide recommendations, expert advice, and guidance on any matter relating to Strategic Economic Plan, the work of the Board, and the Delivery Panels;
- to advise on the policies and programmes outlined in the SEP;
- to review the delivery of the SEP
- to convene the Solent LEP Area European Structural Investment Fund Committee (if required)
- to review the European Structural Investment Strategy
- to encourage optimal delivery of the strategic priorities across programmes, and the optimal delivery of strategic priorities;
- to provide a strategic review of the development and delivery of the multi-year strategic economic plan.

And the Members shall have regard to these purposes when engaged in the business of the SGF, and the Chief Executive of the Solent LEP and the Chair, shall have regard to them when agreeing the agenda.

### **Openness and transparency**

For the Solent Growth Deal:

The SGF shall conduct its business in an open and transparent way and will:

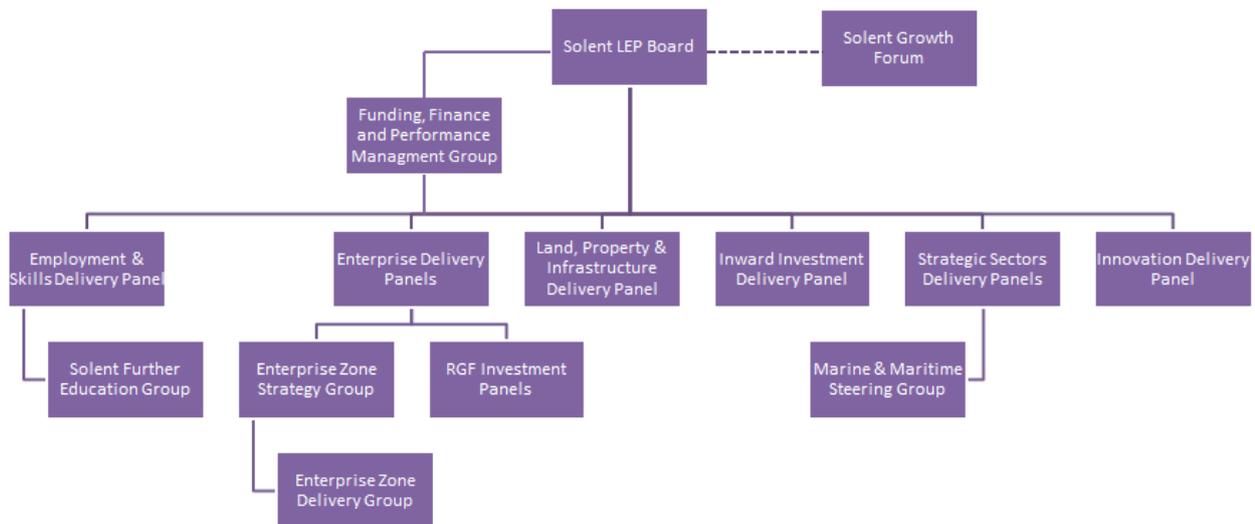
- adhere to the Local Government Transparency Code
- Conduct meetings by way of procedures which substantially follow the principles contained within Part VA of the Local Government Act 1972
- Give advance notice of meetings and publicise minutes

For the EU Structural Investment Fund Strategy:

- Operate in accordance with the Solent LEP Area European Structural Investment Fund Committee terms of reference and Operational Programme guidance.

## **4. Relationship with the Solent LEP Governance Structure**

The SGF shall advise the Solent LEP Board, and resides in the following structure:



The SGF will have regard for and act in accordance with the Solent LEP Assurance Framework, the Joint Agreement, and the rules of procedure as set out by the accountable body in agreement with the Solent LEP and the SGF.

## 5. Membership and Structure

The SGF is established by the Solent LEP Board as part of the Solent LEP Assurance Framework that underpins the Solent Growth Deal.

Members shall include all of those local authorities listed at Schedule 1, Part 1 who shall have Full Member status, together with Ex Officio Members being representatives invited by the Chief Executive of the Solent LEP, in consultation with the Chair of the SGF on the basis of subject and sector knowledge, and the need for a diverse stakeholder view, from sectors including (but not exclusively):

- Education
- Business
- Trade Unions
- Government Agencies and departments
- National Health Service bodies, and Clinical Commissioning Groups

Full Members will comply with the declaration obligations contained within the Assurance Framework, together with the gifts and hospitality policy of the Solent LEP, as published on the Solent LEP website (see: [insert hyperlink](#)).

Alongside the standing Ex Officio Members, examples are listed at Schedule 1, Part 2.

### Membership status and role

Ex Officio Members will have a non-voting role and will provide subject or sector specific expertise, advice, and challenge.

Full Members of the SGF may vote on any matter.

## 6. Chairperson

The Chair will be selected from amongst the Full Members of the SGF by consensus, but shall not be a “P” Director of the Solent LEP.

## **7. Voting Arrangements**

Each Full Member of the SGF will have one vote. Member representatives will be authorised to vote on behalf of their authority.

Voting will be by simple majority.

## **8. Support and Administration Agreements**

The democratic services support for the SGF will be the responsibility of the Solent LEP accountable body, who will source this service through PUSH.

The SGF will be supported by the executive team of the Solent LEP and the Solent LEP accountable body and associated company secretariat. Ex Officio support is provided by additional expertise from Local Authorities in the Solent LEP area, Government agencies, business representative organisations, NHS and clinical commissioning groups, and social enterprise to ensure that there is sufficient capacity to support the work of the SGF.

Independent support may be commissioned by the SGF to support it with the discharge of its role, in accordance with the financial limits and budget approved by the Solent LEP Board.

## **9. Meeting Arrangements and Frequency**

Meetings of the SGF shall be conducted in accordance with the Assurance Framework for the Solent Growth Deal and as agreed by the accountable body for the Solent LEP (Portsmouth City Council).

SGF meetings will be open to the public, and subject to the notice period set out in the Joint Agreement. The SGF will meet three times per year and scheduled in advance of LEP Board meetings.

## **10. Complaints and Whistle-blowing**

The Chief Executive of the Solent LEP has established and published a complaints policy, which broadly complies with that of Portsmouth City Council who shall make arrangements for the investigation of alleged breaches of law, standards, or public fund management.

## Schedule 1, Part 1

### Full Members

- East Hampshire District Council
- Eastleigh Borough Council
- Fareham Borough Council
- Gosport Borough Council
- Havant Borough Council
- Hampshire County Council
- Isle of Wight Council
- New Forest District Council
- Portsmouth City Council
- Southampton City Council
- Test Valley Borough Council
- Winchester City Council

### Part 2

#### Ex Officio Members

#### Standing Members

- Executive Representative of the LEP
- Chief Finance Officer of the LEP

#### Invited Members

- Representative/s from the Higher Education sector
- Representative/s from the Further Education sector
- Business Organisation Rep
- Trade Union Representative
- Voluntary and Community Sector representative
- Government Agencies (Highways Agency, and relevant highways authority, Network Rail, Environment Agency)
- EUSIF Managing Authority (DCLG)
- National Health Services bodies, and the Clinical Commissioning Group
- Any individual, expert, or representative of an organisation or business deemed suitable by the Chief Executive of the LEP in consultation with the Chair.