



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

# SOLENT ENTERPRISE ZONE SKILLS PLAN EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



## FOREWARD

Enterprise Zones are a key part of the Coalition Government's growth agenda. The Solent Enterprise Zone, one of the first new Enterprise Zones to be designated nationally, is a clear demonstration of the commitment of partners in Solent to seek to regenerate an area which has experienced significant economic and social difficulties. Through the opportunities afforded by the Enterprise Zone designation, we believe we can create an exciting new development which will enhance and benefit the whole of Solent, whilst addressing the specific challenge of creating new jobs for local people.

Solent Enterprise Zone provides a unique opportunity to combine a substantial package of benefits designated by Government, together with the strong commitment of Solent partners to work together and combine resources. Through this we seek to work to the benefit of businesses and those who live and work in the area as well as attracting new high growth companies, to secure the area's long term prosperity. Already, there are signs that the designation of the area is acting as a catalyst for ideas, development opportunities and securing additional resources.

But let us not underestimate the challenge. For whilst the Government has given the Solent Enterprise Zone its backing, there can be no guarantee of success. We know from previous initiatives such as this that the package of incentives alone will not be enough. The unconditional support and commitment of the partners and businesses will be needed to truly make this a success.



Doug Morrison  
Chairman  
Solent Local Enterprise Partnership



Anne-Marie Mountifield  
Chief Executive  
Solent Local Enterprise Partnership

# SOLENT ENTERPRISE ZONE SKILLS PLAN – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## INTRODUCTION



This *Skills Plan*, commissioned by Solent LEP and produced by the Marchmont Observatory at the University of Exeter, aims to:

*Promote a shared understanding of the Skills priorities needed to support the development of the Solent EZ to ensure that the provision of adult skills is tailored to the needs of the EZ, thereby maximising employment opportunities for the resident labour force on the Gosport Peninsula.*<sup>1</sup>

It has developed in partnership with the Solent EZ Stakeholder Group and has drawn on:

- a literature review of relevant research and policy;
- a broad-ranging data analysis;
- presentations and views expressed by members of the Solent EZ Stakeholder Group during two workshops;
- interviews with employers and training providers; and
- responses to an online survey.

The *Skills Plan* thus seeks to: understand the challenges facing the Solent Enterprise Zone (EZ) and its surrounding area; articulate the skills needs of businesses; and, assess the resources available to meet those needs. Through this process we have identified a range of actions that will be required to ensure that the demands of businesses and the needs of local people are met, both now and in the future.

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<sup>1</sup> The Enterprise Zone Skills Fund – Outline Plan available at [http://www.push.gov.uk/pjc-amm-120607-r01-append\\_a.pdf](http://www.push.gov.uk/pjc-amm-120607-r01-append_a.pdf)

## SOLENT ENTERPRISE ZONE SKILLS PLAN – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### THE SOLENT ENTERPRISE ZONE



The Solent EZ is located on an ex-military airfield, HMS Daedalus, situated on the Gosport Peninsula between Portsmouth and Southampton. This coastal location benefits from both slipway access to the sea and an operational runway. It is a large site, covering around 400 acres, of which approximately 200 are located within the Enterprise Zone, made up by both empty land for development as well as a significant number of hangars and other buildings that are in need of renovation or replacement.

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## SOLENT ENTERPRISE ZONE SKILLS PLAN – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OBJECTIVES



Solent LEP has an ambitious vision for the site, aiming to make it:

*'Solent's premier location for advanced manufacturing and technology focused on the marine, aviation and aerospace sectors'.<sup>2</sup>*

More specific objectives are to:

- Create up to 3,700 additional jobs on the EZ by 2026, contributing more than one third of the Solent LEP's additional jobs target;
- Promote an advanced manufacturing and technology cluster focused on marine, aviation and aerospace;
- Provide a catalyst for the regeneration of Gosport, as the least economically viable area in South Hampshire; and
- Utilise the incremental growth in business rates to unlock the full potential of this and other Solent employment sites.

These objectives also align with the priorities set out in the Portsmouth and Urban South Hampshire (PUSH) Economic Development Strategy, which identifies Advanced Manufacturing, Marine and Aerospace as three of the areas five High GVA priority sectors.

Attracting new businesses to the EZ, and supporting existing ones to grow, requires a concerted effort. Partners will need to harness of a wide range of resources to provide sufficient critical mass to make the most of this exciting proposition. Meeting the skills needs of employers is central to this effort and will require innovative approaches to the design and delivery of skills provision. Equally critical will be ensuring that local people are equipped with the skills to meet these needs.

This requires a strong partnership approach to address issues of market failure and ensure the right mix of public funding and private investment is available to deliver the solutions the area needs.

The Government has recently announced its commitment to enhance the role of LEPs, positioning them as key players in developing the strategic planning that will drive the delivery of skills, as well as having a say over spending of national growth funds for housing, transport and planning. This enhanced role in ensuring that resources are used to meet local needs will be an important additional dimension to the success of the EZ.

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<sup>2</sup> Solent LEP, *The Solent Enterprise Zone at Daedalus, Implementation Plan, 2011 – 2013*.

## SOLENT ENTERPRISE ZONE SKILLS PLAN – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### DEVELOPING THE SKILLS PLAN



The content of this report has been developed in consultation with local partners, using the following methods:

1. a review of the relevant literature, including research reports and policy documents;
2. an analysis of a wide range of data sources;
3. a workshop with the Solent EZ Stakeholder group;
4. interviews with key local employers and training providers; and
5. an analysis of input given in response to an online survey.

It has been overseen by the Solent LEP Chief Executive and her Executive Support team.

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# SOLENT ENTERPRISE ZONE SKILLS PLAN – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## CONTEXT



Alongside the core EZ offer, Solent LEP and local partners have already taken a number of additional measures to kick-start the development of Solent EZ.

The two local planning authorities have made a resolution to grant outline planning consents for the development of over one million square feet of commercial floor-space at the site, which, in total, contains 82 hectares of development land, available for new build and the conversion of existing buildings. Development Orders are being considered to simplify the planning regime further.

Solent LEP, the Homes and Communities Agency and Hampshire County Council will be investing over £15 million in a phase one development of the EZ, to unlock 21.6 acres of land for new commercial space (including 25,000 square feet of new advanced manufacturing business space), as well as off-site access improvements to the road network leading from Fareham and the M27 to the site.

Solent LEP has secured £5 million from Round 2 of the Regional Growth Fund (RGF), £2.94 million of which is being used for an ‘Expansion Fund’ providing grants of between £50,000 and £200,000 to small and medium-sized businesses that move to or that are already based on the site. This is a competitive grant fund, to accelerate business growth at the Solent Enterprise Zone and to safeguard existing jobs within a) companies already located on the site or b) businesses moving onto the site engaged in advanced manufacturing (with a focus on marine, aviation, and aerospace or similar advanced engineering businesses). Bidders to this Fund are required to invest at least 80% of the capital requirement for the project as a whole. An additional £1.5 million of RGF has been secured by the Homes and Communities Agency to improve the infrastructure.

Solent LEP has also been advised that they have been awarded £13m from Round 3 of the Regional Growth fund for the Solent Futures project. This provides £13m of investment, of which £10m will be allocated to support the defence sector in the Solent and £3m will be used to develop CEMAST - a Centre for Engineering Manufacturing and Engineering Skills Training at the Solent EZ. CEMAST is envisaged as ‘a world-class employer-led training hub’, delivering training and support to businesses sited on or around the Enterprise Zone, focused on manufacturing, engineering, marine and aerospace. Positioned in a prime location on the site, it is designed to act as a catalyst for attracting manufacturing employers to the EZ and securing a sustainable future for advanced manufacturing skills in the Solent.

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## SOLENT ENTERPRISE ZONE SKILLS PLAN – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### DEMAND FOR SKILLS



#### Demand for skills

In total, CEMAST, which was initiated and is being developed by Fareham College, will receive £13 million of investment:

- £3m from Hampshire County Council;
- £3m from Solent LEP's Growing Places bid;
- £3m from Solent LEP's Solent Futures bid;
- £3m from Skills Funding Agency; and
- £1m from Fareham College.

Due to open in September 2014, it will accommodate all of Fareham College's engineering provision alongside St Vincent College's marine engineering provision. It is anticipated that total provision will build to around 600 learners over 4 years, of which 200 are expected to be Apprenticeships.

All partners, including those investing in CEMAST, are clear that it needs to be much more than a single provider training centre. It needs to be a hub to which employers are drawn and through which they can access solutions to all their skills needs, including those at higher level. If aspirations are realised, CEMAST should offer local manufacturers the opportunity to: network with peers from other businesses; build knowledge; access innovation support; collaborate on recruitment; and develop bespoke provision.

The foundations of the Solent EZ will be built upon a set of existing sectoral strengths. The importance of the engineering, aerospace and marine industries to the Solent LEP remains evident in the presence of major employers with supply chains running through the area, such as:

- BAE Maritime Services and Naval Ships which has a total of more than 4,000 employees employed across three locations within the Solent LEP area;
  - QinetiQ, a Fareham-based defence technology company, focused on research, design and the development of marine, aerospace and land-based defence equipment;
  - Eaton Aerospace, which has around 800 employees in Fareham, producing (re)fuelling systems and components for the aerospace sector;
  - Vector Aerospace, which undertakes helicopter repair, maintenance and overhaul in Gosport.
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## SOLENT ENTERPRISE ZONE SKILLS PLAN – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### DEMAND FOR SKILLS



#### **The Skills Plan analysis shows that:**

- Compared with the average for England as a whole, the LEP also has a much higher concentration of employment in ‘advanced manufacturing’, particularly in the areas of computer, electronic and optical products, and electrical equipment.
  - The Solent Enterprise Zone area has an even greater concentration of manufacturing employment than the LEP as a whole, accounting for 11% of all employees, around 7,200 jobs in all.
  - In terms of employment in the LEP priority sectors, there has been some growth across the LEP area, with around 4,800 more jobs in 2011 compared with 2009, but relatively little of that growth has been in Fareham & Gosport. Nevertheless, employment in priority sectors remains comparatively more important to Fareham & Gosport than elsewhere in the LEP, accounting for 9.4% of all employee jobs.
  - At the same time, in the LEP priority sectors, the overall number of active businesses has fallen by around 8%, with most of the fall being within advanced engineering. Turnover in that sector has fallen accordingly, but there have been significant increases in local turnover in defence and the extended marine sector.
  - Looking to the future, the LEP is forecast to lose a further 15% of its engineering employment (2,300 jobs) between 2010 and 2020, reflecting national level forecasts. However, this change will affect different occupations to a different extent, with a clear shift away from lower skilled employment in process/machine operatives and elementary occupations, and strong increases in higher-level occupations i.e. managerial, professional and technical.
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## SOLENT ENTERPRISE ZONE SKILLS PLAN – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### DEMAND FOR SKILLS



**The challenge then is how to build on these strengths, particularly in the context of some of the broader economic challenges:**

- The overall number of businesses (VAT/PAYE registered) has fallen in recent years, more sharply than national trends, accompanied by a sharp dip in the number of new business registrations.
  - Increasing numbers of local people have become self-employed in recent years, possibly setting up businesses that are too small to be VAT/PAYE registered.
  - Survival rates for new businesses have plummeted during the economic downturn, although this is true of the nation as a whole.
  - One important indicator of the demand for skills is the number of employers reporting a skills gap. 16% of Solent LEP employers, that is 9,500, reported having a skills gap, with as many as 37,800 employees assessed as not being fully proficient in their job. This accounted for 5.9% of total employment, a slightly higher level than was reported by employers across England as whole (5.5% of employees).
  - The greatest concentrations of skills gaps are found in some of the least skilled occupations, such as Elementary occupations, Sales and customer service and machine operatives.
  - Higher level (managerial, professional and technical) occupations have the lowest intensities of skills gaps (both locally and nationally), suggesting that higher level skills are not the main source of difficulty for employers in terms of being able to obtain the skilled labour they need.
  - Taking into account the need to replace those in the workforce who will be leaving because of retirement (or other factors), it is estimated that there will be a net requirement for around 3,500 new recruits into the LEP's engineering sector from 2010 to 2020. Almost 80% of this requirement is expected to be in higher level occupations.
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## SOLENT ENTERPRISE ZONE SKILLS PLAN – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### MEETING THE SKILLS NEEDED



A critical issue for the EZ is the extent to which the current supply of skilled labour in the local area meets those needs described above.

#### **The Skills Plan analysis shows that:**

- 45% of local employment is in highly skilled jobs, in the three most highly skilled occupational groups (Managers and Senior Officials, Professionals, and Associate Professional and Technical occupations). This is slightly higher than the national average.
- However, the analysis indicates that the LEP's manufacturing workforce is not as skilled as might be expected, given its relatively high concentrations of employment. The proportion of people working in 'science, research, engineering and technology occupations' at professional or associate professional level is lower than the South East average, while the proportion working as 'process, plant and machine operatives' is higher.
- Claimant unemployment currently stands at 2.5% for the LEP (24,891 claimants), well below the national average of 3.8%. However, the 'real' unemployment rate is much higher (as measured by the ILO), currently estimated at 6.5% (49,200 unemployed) for the LEP.
- The claimant unemployment rate for Fareham & Gosport is 2.4%, with some local 'hotspots'. Six wards in the area had unemployment rates higher than the national average.

## SOLENT ENTERPRISE ZONE SKILLS PLAN – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### MEETING THE SKILLS NEEDED



- The sharp rise in unemployment since the recession started has particularly affected young people, although the proportion of 16-24 year olds out of work is not as high as nationally. With a stuttering economic recovery and a slow increase in the number of job opportunities being created, the number of long-term unemployed has been rising consistently over recent years.
  - In terms of their usual occupation, just 5% of the currently unemployed worked in occupations that would most commonly be found within the LEP's priority sectors. The number of claimants usually in these occupations has been falling in the last two years, suggesting a reasonably good match between employer demand for these kinds of labour and the skills local people can offer.
  - A lower than average proportion of the Solent's LEP's workforce (32%) is qualified to Level 4 and above, with a higher proportion qualified to Level 3 (21%). A quarter of the working age population (26%) do not have a Level 2 qualification, which is generally regarded as the benchmark for employability.
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# SOLENT ENTERPRISE ZONE SKILLS PLAN – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## THE FLOW OF SKILLS



The Skills Plan examines various aspects of the local education and training infrastructure to look at its engagement with Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) subjects, as these may be the most important areas of skills for employers within the LEP's priority sectors.

### **Analysis found that:**

- Achievement levels at Key Stage 2 (11 year olds) in Maths and Science are generally above average, while at Key Stage 3 (14 year olds), they fall below average. At both levels, schools in Hampshire generally perform better than their counterparts in Portsmouth, Southampton and the Isle of Wight.
  - Engagement with STEM subjects is fairly high locally at GCSE level, with 40% of entries in related subjects. An encouraging sign is the higher-than-average levels of entries in additional Science and Maths options.
  - The number of entries in ICT and Design & Technology options have fallen sharply, in line with the wider trend across England.
  - At A Level, STEM subjects accounted for 24% of all Fareham & Gosport entries in 2011, lower than LEP and national averages. There were very few entries in Design & Technology options (0.6% - a third if the proportion for England), and entries in Biology, Chemistry and Physics were all significantly lower than average.
  - In 2010/11, 54,540 people from the Solent LEP were participating in Higher Education (HE). The recent trend has been for rising participation, with a levelling off in the last year. Despite this levelling off, the overall number of HE students from the area was 7.5% higher than in 2007/08.
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## SOLENT ENTERPRISE ZONE SKILLS PLAN – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### THE FLOW OF SKILLS



- Just 30% of HE students from the Solent LEP area were attending one of the four Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) within the LEP area (Southampton, Portsmouth, Winchester and Southampton Solent Universities), a proportion which has fallen for each of the last three years.
  - In terms of Further Education (FE) (excluding A Levels), local provision appears to be more weighted towards priority sectors, with enrolments in STEM-related provision growing strongly in recent years.
  - Comparing locally delivered provision with local residents' take up, the data suggests that there is particular demand from local people for provision in Freight Logistics
  - Local Apprenticeship delivery is much more heavily weighted towards the LEP's priority sectors, where STEM subjects accounted for 63% of all Apprenticeship enrolments, more than double the level across the LEP and around six times higher than nationally. This suggests that providers have managed a high rate of penetration among local employers in these key sectors.
  - In terms of local HE provision that might be most useful to employers in priority sectors, there were over 6,500 students in these 'priority sector subjects' in 2010/11, and these subjects have grown strongly since 2007/08, by almost 27%. The largest areas of provision are Electronic & electrical engineering, Mechanical engineering and Civil engineering.
  - In terms of training being arranged and/or funded by employers, the Solent LEP compares favourably with the all-England average, with 66% of employers having funded or arranged training for staff in the last year.
  - Further data suggests that levels of job-related training (whether employer-funded or not) are relatively high in the Solent LEP area compared with regional and national averages, with 13% of 16-64 year olds in the area having undertaken training the last four weeks, and 23% having done so in the last 13 weeks. Encouragingly, the data suggests that the Solent LEP area has managed to maintain and even increase its levels of job-related training throughout the economic downturn.
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The analysis has led to a number of recommendations for action.

### **Recommendation 1**

Employers (and employees) in the advanced engineering, aerospace and marine sectors should be encouraged to:

- Support schools' and colleges' Careers Information Advice and Guidance (IAG) activities;
- Provide workplace visits and work experience for young people;
- Act as STEM Ambassadors;
- Encourage more girls and young women to consider engineering and STEM careers;
- Support STEM enhancement & enrichment activities;
- Support Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for teachers and technicians.

### **Recommendation 2**

Public sector partners (such as STEMNET Hampshire and the Portsmouth Education Business Partnership (EBP) should work together to provide a coherent package of information and support for employers at Solent EZ and across the LEP area, demonstrating the benefits and opportunities that exist for employers wishing to be active in improving the flow of skills into their sector.

### **Recommendation 3**

Solent LEP should support initiatives to improve maths and science teaching in Fareham & Gosport, focusing on schools that need particular support. Employers locating at the Solent EZ should be encouraged to support this agenda. They should be provided with clear information on how they can get involved, and be supported through the EBP and other partners where necessary. Resources should be provided for jointly developed curriculum enrichment projects, where necessary.

### **Recommendation 4**

Alongside raising interest in STEM study (Recommendations 1 & 2) and improving STEM teaching (Recommendation 3), larger employers based at Solent EZ could be encouraged to become involved in the governance of local schools and colleges, as a route to ensuring that the provision and skills that they deliver meet local employer needs.

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### **Recommendation 5**

Solent LEP, working with employers, should take steps to ensure that facilities at CEMAST keep pace with the latest industry standards. Employers should be encouraged to donate or contribute towards the cost of equipment that is required to meet their training needs. Solent LEP should make it clear that it is willing to seek public sector co-financing for the acquisition of equipment where there is adequate employer support, drawing down public resources through sources such as the Employer Ownership of Skills programme of the European Regional Development Fund. Initiatives that reach out into supply chains, drawing in smaller companies to support collaborative employer-led projects focused on up-skilling in key areas, should be supported.

### **Recommendation 6**

Solent LEP should work with local employers to understand and overcome specific barriers to delivering greater volumes of Apprenticeships better.

Financial incentives should be considered, such as awarding grants to priority sector employers who offer Apprenticeships, Advanced or Higher Level Apprenticeships for the first time (or for the first x number of Apprenticeship offered).

The scope for extending existing Apprenticeship brokerage services for employers at the site should also be examined. Although this may be complex, given the competitive nature of Apprenticeship delivery, it is important that employers have a clear route through which they can: link to young people; establish their entry requirements; identify the content of pre-Apprenticeship training; set up screening processes and job trials; and source impartial advice and training from the organisation best suited to their needs.

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# SOLENT ENTERPRISE ZONE SKILLS PLAN – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## THE SKILLS PLAN



### **Recommendation 7**

CEMAST must be much more than a college based on the site, and must act as an avenue to a wide range of specialist and higher-level provision.

Solent LEP should encourage a high-level partnership working between training providers and the delivery of an integrated offer to employers moving to the Solent EZ.

Employers locating at Solent EZ should have easy and free access to expert, impartial advice on how their skills need might best be met. They should be supported in assessing the options available to them by an independent Skills Broker, who has knowledge of the sector and an overview of the provision available at different levels, in the local area. Although it will be important for this individual to be independent of Fareham College, we would suggest that the service be delivered from the CEMAST centre, in keeping with the emphasis on building CEMAST as a hub for employers on the site.

### **Recommendation 8**

Solent LEP should consult with partners on the case for including the delivery of higher level skills within advanced engineering, aerospace and marine as a priority within a prospectus for the use of EU funds at local level over the period 2014 to 2020.

### **Recommendation 9**

HEIs in the Solent LEP area should be encouraged to align an element of their outreach activities to the Solent EZ priority sectors. They should consider giving less advantaged school pupils and pupils from poorly performing schools in Fareham & Gosport, opportunities to engage with their STEM programmes by:

- Offering guaranteed interviews and, where appropriate, lower offers to pupils in schools that they support;
- Offering guaranteed admissions interviews to those who successfully complete a university-preparation programme, such as summer school;
- Recognise the successful completion of such programmes with UCAS tariff points.

These recommendations align with those in the Cabinet Office reports, *University Challenge: How Higher Education Can Advance Social Mobility* of October 2012.

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### **Recommendation 10**

Employers on the Enterprise Zone, and those within the EZ priority sectors across Solent LEP, should be encouraged to participate in HE programmes (such as those described above) that enable them to identify and recruit local graduates with the skills they require.

Solent LEP should ensure that impartial information, support and guidance is available to local employers through the services of the Skills Broker (identified in recommendation 7).

In keeping with the aspiration of establishing CEMAST as a central hub for employers at Solent EZ, information on these initiatives should be readily accessible through CEMAST.

### **Recommendation 11**

Solent LEP should include within their proposals for European Funds for the period 2014 to 2020, scope to create a programme that funds the retraining and up-skilling of individuals who are at risk of redundancy or who have been made redundant from the Solent EZ priority sectors. The structure of this programme, which may take the form of grants to individuals or employers, requires further discussion.

### **Recommendation 12**

Employers at Solent EZ should be made aware of and encouraged make use of the support available through Jobcentre Plus and Welfare to Work providers.

### **Recommendation 13**

Partners should take steps to ensure that employers are fully aware of the wide range of R&D expertise and facilities that available to employers at the EZ, both locally and beyond. Networking evenings, presentations, poster-sessions, open-forums or speed-dating sessions should be organised, focused on CEMAST. Site visits should be considered where appropriate, e.g. to view specialist facilities that are available to hire, such as the Warsash wave tank or Southampton University wind tunnel.

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#### **Recommendation 14**

CEMAST should be developed as a focus for employer networking and information-sharing. Employers located on and around the Solent EZ should be encouraged and supported to join a Solent EZ employer network, which should link with wider supply chain initiatives, such as the Farnborough Aerospace Consortium. The Solent EZ employer network, should host a series of business briefings and informal events, based at CEMAST, where employers can gather to collaborate and further their understanding of topics and activities (such as those of business support organisations) that are of mutual interest and advantage.

#### **Recommendation 15**

Solent LEP should conduct a review of the availability of incubation and ‘move-on’ space in the area, with a view to establishing whether demand is sufficient to warrant further investment, potentially supported through ERDF funds.

# SOLENT ENTERPRISE ZONE SKILLS PLAN – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## MEASURING SUCCESS



### Measuring Success

The LEP is committed to monitoring progress and assessing the performance of the EZ and its impact on the local economy.

To support this aim, the Solent EZ Stakeholder Group have identified that they wish the University of Exeter to construct a 'Dashboard' which should include the following indicators:

- The number of enterprises in the EZ priority sectors
- The number of employees in the EZ priority Sectors
- Change in employment by occupational group
- Change in youth unemployment
- Change in the number of young people Not in Education Employment and Training
- % of the population with qualifications at Level 4, Level 3 and below Level 2
- Attainment of Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM) at age 19
- Levels of STEM study at FE
- The volume of STEM Apprenticeships

The Dashboard will be published and made available for public scrutiny through the LEP website. It will be updated regularly and used by partners as a basis for monitoring progress and assessing where there is a need for additional action.

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