



SOLENT
LOCAL
ENTERPRISE
PARTNERSHIP

Information and Application Pack

Becoming a Solent LEP Business Member

Becoming a Solent LEP Business Director

15th March 2016

TOGETHER.STRONGER

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Foreword from Gary Jeffries, Chairman, Solent LEP

It is an exciting time for the Solent Local Enterprise Partnership. We have agreed a £151.9m Local Growth Deal, which represents the first step in delivering on our ambitious Strategic Economic Plan.

Across the Solent, construction is underway on the first wave of projects which will transform our local economy, including a new centre of excellence for composites, advanced manufacturing and marine technology on the Isle of Wight, upgrades to facilities at Eastleigh College, including a new Advanced Technology block, and improvements to the road network on the Fareham-Gosport peninsular to increase connectivity for local businesses and unlock key development sites in the area. This is just the beginning and 2016 will see further construction works underway on exciting new projects, including a new Cancer Immunology Centre in Southampton which will cement this areas position as a world leader in immunology and drive innovation across the life sciences sector. Work underway on projects like these represents an extremely strong start in our mission to transform the Solent economy. However, challenges remain if the Solent area is to achieve its full potential.

Nationally, the Government has recognised that increasing productivity is the challenge of our time if the UK is to compete with other advanced economies and, in the Solent, our productivity levels remain 5% below the national average and 12% below the South East average. Clearly this balance must be redressed in the coming years and, alongside delivery of our established Local Growth Deal programme, the Solent LEP Board are already looking ahead to identify the next wave of strategic investments which will support our economic growth. 2016 will see the LEP establish a local productivity plan for the area and supporting innovation strategy which builds on those areas where we are, or have the potential to be, truly world leading and we have already begun the work to develop our pipeline of future projects that will build on our initial Local Growth Deal progress and continue to drive growth in the area. Our Business Directors play an absolutely integral role in this work, ensuring that we continue to look forward to address barriers to growth experience by business and ensure we can meet the ambition set out in our Strategic Economic Plan for the Solent area.

We currently have at least one vacant seat for a Business Director to join the LEP Board and there is therefore an opportunity for a new business leader to get involved in shaping our work. Considering the increased focus on delivery of our £151.9m capital infrastructure programme we are expecting this year, the Board are particularly keen to encourage applications from senior private sector business leaders with experience in construction, development and regeneration. We also recognise that corporate boards perform at their best when they include the top people who come from a range of perspectives, backgrounds and areas across the breadth of our economic geography. We are therefore also keen to encourage applications from senior female business leaders in the Solent area, business leaders from the Solent small and medium sized business (SME) community, and also senior business leaders operating on the Isle of Wight. However, this is an open call for new Director candidates and we will be welcoming applications from business leaders in all sectors and backgrounds. We are in a strong position to build on growing momentum in the Solent economy and I hope that we receive some strong candidates for our LEP business members to consider.

In addition to the opportunity to join the LEP Board, we are also opening the application process for businesses to become members of our company. Our Business Members are integral to the shaping the work of the LEP; voting on changes to how we operate under our Articles of Association, electing our Business Directors to the LEP Board to lead the strategic direction of the organisation and getting directly involved in work on our delivery panels. I hope we are able to secure additional membership of local businesses over the coming weeks that want to support our work to grow the Solent economy.



Section 1: Introduction

The Solent Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) was formed after the Government offered local areas the opportunity to take control of their future economic development. It is a locally-owned partnership between business, local authorities and higher education and plays a central role in determining local economic priorities and undertaking activities to drive economic growth and the creation of local jobs.

The Solent LEP is led by the business community and supported by three university partners, the further education sector, three unitary authorities, eight district councils, one county council and the voluntary and community sector – all working together to secure a more prosperous and sustainable future for the Solent area. It is the first LEP in the country to have a fully-elected board of directors.

There is currently an opportunity for businesses to join the Solent LEP as members. We are keen to broaden the business membership to strengthen the work of the Solent LEP as well as provide opportunities for companies to become more actively involved in the work of the LEP.

In addition to this Membership opportunity, there is currently at least one vacant seat on the Solent LEP Board of Directors. Directors are selected from amongst the Business Membership and, accordingly, these two processes are linked.

Section 2 of this document provides information in relation to becoming a Business Member of Solent LEP Ltd. Membership of Solent LEP Ltd is a pre-requisite for all LEP Directors and, therefore, it is recommended that if you are not currently a Member of Solent LEP Ltd, you should refer to this section in the first instance.

Applications to stand as an LEP Director are also encouraged from existing LEP Business Members. If your business is already a Member of Solent LEP Ltd, and you are interested in applying for a seat on the Board, you can refer directly to Section 3 of this document for information on the role of an LEP Director and Section 4 of this document for information on how to apply. The information in section 2 will not be relevant for existing B Members of Solent LEP Ltd.

Section 2: Becoming a Solent LEP Business Member

The following section will provide an overview of key information in relation to becoming a Member of Solent LEP Ltd. Full details in relation to membership of Solent LEP Ltd can be found in our Articles of Association. It is recommended that you review these before applying for membership. Our Articles are published at the following link:

www.solentlep.org.uk/uploads/documents/Solent_LEP_Articles_of_Association.pdf

2A: Company Structure of Solent Local Enterprise Partnership Ltd

The Solent Local Enterprise Partnership has been registered as a company, limited by guarantee and it was incorporated on 18 March 2011. The Company has three categories of Membership:

- B Membership – for businesses
- P Membership – for local authorities
- H Membership – for higher education institutions

In keeping with the Articles of Association and in accordance with company law, the board of Solent Local Enterprise Partnership Limited has been democratically elected by its members, thus ensuring that we have a robust, transparent and accountable delivery structure in place.

The structures continue to evolve reflecting the strategic role that the LEP has assumed as the lead body for economic development and the need to establish delivery capacity for its key programmes of work.

All Members of Solent LEP Ltd are required to vote on any future changes which the Company may wish to make to the Articles of Association and, accordingly, the way in which the Company operates. In order to ensure that the LEP is business led, Business Members (or “B” Members) of Solent LEP Ltd have the highest percentage (50%) of votes in relation to members resolutions including changes to the Company’s Articles of Association.

In addition, each membership class elects its own representatives to the Solent LEP Board of Directors. The Directors are responsible for delivering the strategic goals of the Solent LEP and, again at Board level, the LEP is business led.

The Solent LEP Board consists of 15 fully elected Directors. This is made up of:

- 8 Business (B) Directors
- 5 Local Authority (P) Directors
- 1 Higher Education (H) Director
- 1 Executive (E) Director who is also the Solent LEP Chief Executive.

2B: Benefits of becoming a Solent LEP Member

Business Members of the Solent LEP have the opportunity to influence and shape the work of the Solent LEP in two main ways:

1. Each B member has the right to exercise one vote in relation to members' resolutions (including changes to the Company's Articles of Association), and;
2. The B Membership from time to time, as a class, the exclusive right, by simple majority vote, to appoint, remove and replace up to eight Company Directors (the B Directors).

In addition, business members have the opportunity to become directly involved in the work of the Solent LEP in many ways; including supporting the delivery panels that lead on the LEPs key priority areas. Further details on Solent LEP priority areas can be found in our growth strategy: *Transforming Solent*, [available here](#).

2C: Eligibility for Membership

If you wish to apply for Business Membership of the Solent LEP, your business must be eligible against the following criteria. The Business must:

- be currently undertaking professional, business or other commercial activities with a view to profit within the Solent LEP region (a map of the Solent LEP region can be found at: www.solentlep.org.uk/about);
- not be a representative organisation;
- and, be prepared to support the work of the Solent LEP through fielding a senior representative for consideration as a Solent LEP B Director (see section 3 of this document for details), field representatives for Solent LEP delivery panels, or contribute to the work of the LEP in other ways such as donation of services or hosting of meetings/events etc.

2D: Liabilities of Members

The liability of LEP members is limited. Please note that there is currently no cost or membership subscription fee associated with Solent LEP Membership. However, members will be required to promise, if the company is dissolved while he or she or it is, as applicable, a member, or within twelve months after he or she or it ceases to be a member, to contribute such sum (not exceeding £1.00) as may be demanded of him or her or it towards the payment of the debts and liabilities of the company incurred before he or she or it ceases to be, as applicable, a member or an associate member and the costs charges and expenses of winding up, and the adjustment of the rights of the contributories among themselves.

2E: How to apply for Business Membership

If you would like to apply to become a Business Member of the Solent LEP, please send us:

- A completed expression of interest in membership form with key information (form available at: www.solentlep.org.uk/downloads) including an outline of how your business would be prepared to support the LEP

Please email your completed expression of interest form to info@solentlep.org.uk
You will receive an email reply confirming receipt within 3 working days.

Please note that no documents submitted as part of your membership application will be shared with B Members.

If you are putting forward a candidate for election to the LEP Board, you will need to submit individual candidate information / documents at the same time as your membership documents. Further information on this is included in section 3 and 4.

PLEASE NOTE THE CLOSING DATE FOR APPLICATIONS IS 23:59 ON FRIDAY 8TH APRIL 2016.

2F: Process and Timetable

All applications received before the deadline will be screened by a panel of existing LEP Directors and independent external recruitment and legal colleagues (“the Panel”) to ensure eligibility against the criteria outlined in this document. The Panel will confirm the eligibility of the Business (against the criteria in section 2C).

You will be notified via email of the outcome of these eligibility checks and, if deemed eligible, sent a formal Application for Membership Form which you will need to sign and return to us by the deadline published below in order to confirm your membership of Solent LEP Ltd.

All B Members of the Solent LEP will then consider the B Director candidates from amongst the eligible applicants. Businesses applying for Solent LEP Membership are invited to put forward a candidate for the upcoming election at the same time as submitting your application for membership. If this is the case, please note that there are some additional documents which will need to be submitted at the same time as your application for Membership. This process is outlined in section 3 and 4.

All Members and individual candidates will be advised of the election process and timetable at this time.

Timetable	
Application process to open:	Tuesday 15th March 2016
Closing date for applications:	Friday 8th April 2016
Eligibility checks on applications:	W/C Monday 11th April 2016
Applicants notified of outcome of eligibility checks and eligible applicants sent application documentation:	Wednesday 20th April 2016
Deadline for return of membership and application documentation:	Wednesday 4th May 2016
All LEP B Members and B Director candidates notified of election process and timetable:	Friday 6th May 2016

Section 3: Becoming a Solent LEP Business Director

3A: The role of a Solent LEP Director

There is currently at least one vacancy on the Solent LEP Board of Directors for a new B Director to be appointed. The Solent LEP is seeking prominent business leaders as candidates for the LEP Board of Directors.

Board Members require a strong and detailed appreciation of, and interest in, the strategic issues relating to, and drivers of, the Solent economy and the various opportunities and challenges involved in securing sustainable, private sector led economic growth. The Solent LEP Board have a key role in developing local solutions to enhance the economic prospects within the area and to help plan, support and direct the economic growth of the Solent area.

Details on the existing Board of Directors can be found at www.solentlep.org.uk/team

In terms of time commitments, it is expected that Solent LEP Directors will offer an equivalent of 2 days per month as a minimum.

3B: Who we are looking for

The Solent LEP are seeking a balanced board with a mixture of different skills and backgrounds, covering both the economic geography of the Solent area and the key sectors.

Applications are encouraged from credible people who can see the bigger strategic picture, offer challenge and insight and genuinely input into the process of advancing the LEP's agenda of fostering real and positive change in the Solent region for the ultimate benefit of all. Strong partnership skills are essential and candidates will need to be collegiate and collaborative in their style and approach.

The Solent LEP are currently overseeing delivery of a £151.9m capital infrastructure programme funded through the Solent Local Growth Deal and, in response to this, the Solent LEP Board are particularly keen to encourage applications from senior private sector business leaders with experience in construction, development and regeneration.

In order to complement the geographic coverage of existing Business Directors, the Solent LEP Board is also keen to encourage applications from senior business leaders operating on the Isle of Wight. The Solent LEP supports the case set out in Lord Davies' report on Women on Boards and the added value that diverse perspectives bring to business boards. The Board therefore also wish to encourage applications from senior female business leaders in the Solent area. The Solent LEP is also keen to encourage applications from business leaders in the Solent small and medium sized business (SME) community.

However, notwithstanding the above, this is an open call for new Director candidates and applications from business leaders in all sectors and backgrounds are welcomed.

Further information on the Solent LEP can be found at www.solentlep.org.uk and a copy of the LEPs growth strategy: *Transforming Solent*, is [available here](#).

3C: Role Specification

Bringing independent sound judgement, Solent LEP Board Directors are expected to:

- Contribute to the board to ensure a balance between high level coordination and driving the commissioning of the agreed programme of strategic projects to bring about the economic and physical transformation of the Solent area.
- Provide strategic leadership, challenge and support to the Board and contribute to the development of one of the most successful LEPs in the country; establishing and developing the LEPs credibility and confidence within the wider market.
- Represent the Solent LEP locally, nationally and internationally, encouraging networking and joint working with other LEP's, government and private sector organisations based outside the area.
- Represent and promote the Solent on a local, national and international basis to deliver on the priorities of the LEP, bringing about the economic and physical transformation of the area.
- Actively engage with all interested parties, but particularly with the private sector, to capture and engage their interest and facilitate their activity in the Solent economic area.
- Contribute to and have influence over challenging goals and objectives, and ensure that the strategic aims are delivered through appropriate mechanisms.
- Contribute to the development of the board, providing expert advice and guidance.
- Help ensure effective planning, management and financial control procedures are in place to ensure that all relevant legal and statutory requirements are met.

3D: Person Specification

- Currently a senior management post-holder who is an owner or part-owner (whether by way of shareholding, partnership or direct proprietorship) or board level or similar officer of a Business ("B") Member of the Solent LEP. If your Business is not currently a B Member, please see section 2 for information on how to join.
- Aged 25 or older.
- Is not disqualified under the Articles of Association of the Solent LEP.
- First-hand knowledge and **current** experience of the local Solent business environment, through a strong and proven track record of local business leadership at a senior level.
- Substantial experience and understanding of structuring effective working relationships with both the public and private sector in local, regional, national and international fora.
- Knowledge, understanding and a demonstrable commitment to leading and delivering economic change in the Solent area.
- The ability to make informed, balanced and independent judgements on key economic issues for the Solent.
- The ability to consider the long term implications and broad view of issues, identifying opportunities and key risks.
- The ability to act as an ambassador for the Solent economic area, with extensive experience of working within the private sector and engaging the confidence of key businesses, business organisations, local and central government (including Ministers of State) and other agencies as appropriate.

3E: Other Information

Time commitment

The Director role is likely to involve up to four days per month. It will involve travel throughout the Solent area and, occasionally, travel outside of the Solent to attend external events and meetings. The post will not be remunerated.

Conflict of interest

Board members will be expected to adhere to normal conflict of interest arrangements, and their companies may be excluded from any contracts where the Solent LEP has a direct financial or commissioning interest. Details on the Solent LEP register of interest are available at the following links:

- www.solentlep.org.uk/uploads/documents/Register_of_Interests_Form.pdf
- www.solentlep.org.uk/uploads/documents/Register_of_Events_Attended,_Hospitality_and_Gifts_Received_Form.pdf

Period of appointment

The appointments will be for three years and will be in a personal capacity. Deputies will not be allowed if the Board member is unable to attend.

Section 4: Information for individuals interested in applying to become a Solent LEP Director

Please note that if you are intending to apply for a role on the Solent LEP Board, your business will need to be a Business Member of Solent Local Enterprise Partnership Ltd. As such, if your business is not currently a Solent LEP Member, you will need to apply for membership at the same time as submitting an application for a role on the Board. Information on how to apply for Membership is included in Section 2.

If your business is an existing B Member of Solent LEP Ltd, and you, or a senior person within your business, would like to be considered for a position as an LEP Director, the following information will provide details on the application process for you. You will not need to complete a new application for Membership form and as such, do not need to refer to Section 2.

The role of a LEP Director and eligibility criteria remains the same for candidates from both existing and new members and, for more information on the role, you should refer to the information in section 3 of this document.

4A: How to apply to become a Business Director

If you would like to apply to become a Business Director of the Solent LEP, please send us:

- A brief covering letter highlighting why you are interested in the post, the skills and experience you possess which you feel would be most relevant to the role and the challenge and how you would promote the Solent on a local, national and international basis to deliver on the priorities of the LEP, bringing about the economic and physical transformation of the area.
- Your curriculum vitae (CV)
- A candidate statement which you would be content for us to circulate to other Solent LEP B Members. The template to use in producing your candidate statement can be downloaded at www.solentlep.org.uk/downloads

Please email your covering letter, CV, and candidate statement to info@solentlep.org.uk

You will receive an email reply confirming receipt within 3 working days.

Please note that no documents submitted as part of your application will be shared with B Members except the Candidate Statement form you provide. Your covering letter and CV will only be used to ensure eligibility against the criteria published in this document. We will hold these documents confidentially at the Solent LEP Office. By returning the candidate statement form to us, you are providing consent for us to share this document with existing Solent LEP B Members should you progress to this stage of the process.

PLEASE NOTE THE CLOSING DATE FOR APPLICATIONS IS 23:59 ON FRIDAY 8TH APRIL 2016.

4B: Process and Timetable

All applications received before the deadline will be screened by a panel of existing LEP Directors and independent external recruitment and legal colleagues (“the Panel”) to ensure eligibility against the criteria outlined in this document. The Panel will confirm the eligibility of the Director Candidate (against the criteria in section 3D of this document).

You will be notified via email of the outcome of these eligibility checks.

All B Members of the Solent LEP will then consider the B Director candidates from amongst the eligible applicants. All Members and individual candidates will be advised of the election process and timetable at this time.

Timetable	
Application process to open:	Tuesday 15th March 2016
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Eligibility checks on applications:	W/C Monday 11th April 2016
Applicants notified of outcome of eligibility checks (and eligible new B Member applicants sent joining documentation)	Wednesday 20th April 2016
Deadline for return of membership and application documentation for new B Member applicants:	Wednesday 4th May 2016
All LEP B Members and B Director candidates notified of election process and timetable:	Friday 6th May 2016

Section 5: Contact Information

Should you have any enquiries in relation to any of the information included in this document, please contact the Solent LEP using the below contact information:

In writing at:

Solent LEP Membership
Solent LEP Office
Ground Floor
Building 1000
Lakeside North Harbour
Western Road
Portsmouth
PO6 3EZ

By email at:

info@solentlep.org.uk

Or via phone at:

02392 688 924