



Employment & Skills Board Meeting

7th June 2017

Southampton Solent University



An update from the Chair...

"Welcome to the first of a new, regular update on the work of the Solent Employment and Skills Board (ESB) from our June 2017 meeting. The aim of the ESB, and Solent LEP, is to ensure that we have the skills needed to enable future employment growth in the area and that there are opportunities for local people that want to work in the Solent. Our June meeting was incredibly important in this regard as we focused very much on future opportunities for investment in skills, as well as receiving updates on progress with our work to secure more engagement between businesses and our young people at school who will be critical to the future economy of the Solent."

Sarah McCarthy-Fry, Chair of the Solent Employment and Skills Board

The ESB also received updates on the following areas...

Solent Enterprise Adviser Network

Now in its second year, the Network currently has 48 secondary schools matched with business volunteer advisers, working with management to enable pupils to find out more about the working world. 15 schools are currently awaiting an adviser. Find out more about the role of an Enterprise Adviser [here](#).

Solent Skills & Productivity Fund

A £12.5m fund seeking employer-led skills proposals to help create jobs, support businesses and encourage growth in the area. Find out more [here](#).

Solent LEP's Industrial Strategy Response

Following an extensive dialogue with Solent businesses, new investment to support the development of the skills and talent that our economy needs to succeed was prioritised in the Solent LEP to Government. A link to the full Solent LEP response is available [here](#).

European Funding Opportunities

The ESB were keen to flag opportunities expected to be announced shortly through [European Structural and Investment Funds](#). The ESB were keen in particular to promote opportunities to further support both SMEs and local people access apprenticeships in the Solent, funding to support individuals not currently engaged in employment and funding to support community based projects which would also assist people back into work, particularly targeting support to help those with disabilities secure employment.

Solent Skills Strategy Update

In developing our Industrial Strategy response, the Solent LEP engaged directly with over 100 organisations and the need to develop skills and talent was flagged by all businesses we spoke with as a key priority. The ESB and Solent LEP are keen to respond positively to this feedback and will be developing a new Skills Strategy for the Solent area in the coming months, designed to support the economy and the workforce of the future. It will be absolutely vital that our new Skills strategy works for local businesses and responds to the needs of your current and future workforce. The only way we will be able to ensure this is through securing a wide range of business views to help shape the strategy. Alongside a dedicated business survey, we will be establishing a steering group of Solent Business Leaders to inform the work. If you run a business in the Solent and would be able to help us in the coming months, or even if you just have thoughts on the skills agenda which you think we should consider as we move forward, we would love to hear from you and have set up a dedicated email address at: skills@solentlep.org.uk Please do get in touch.

Further information on the Solent Employment and Skills Board is available [here](#).



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