



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

**Solent Local Enterprise Partnership**

**Solent Growth Forum**

**Terms of Reference**

**July 2017**

## 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 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 established under a Joint Agreement and it seeks 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 receive updates on the delivery of the European Structural Investment Funds
- 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 Executive of the Solent LEP and the Chair, shall have regard to them when agreeing the agenda.

## Openness and transparency

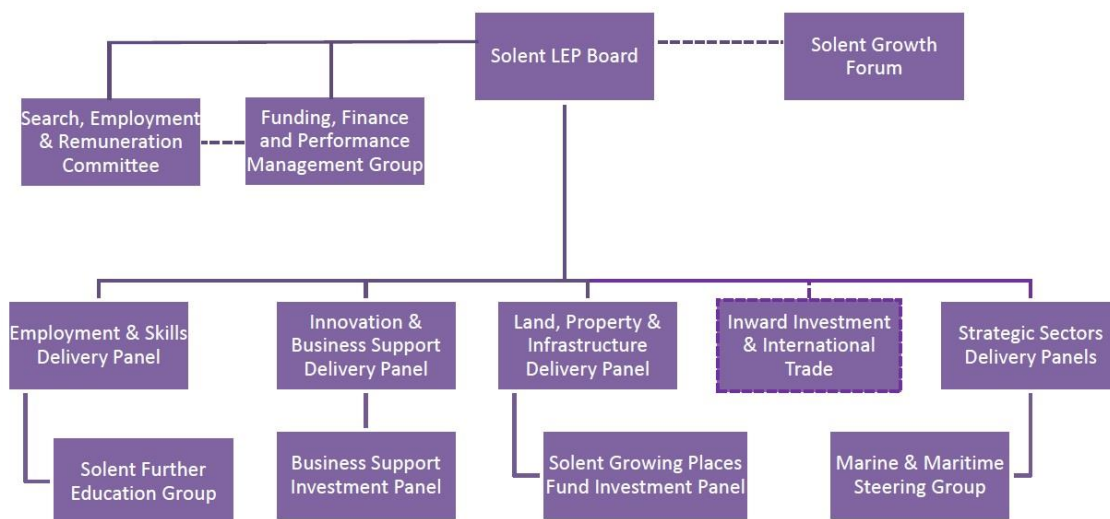
For the Solent Growth Deal:

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

## 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. Full members of the SGF must be drawn from either the Executive Leader, or other executive member, or senior level employee of a Local Authority within the Solent LEP area. Ex Officio Members are representatives invited by the 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/Academia
- 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: <https://solentlep.org.uk/media/1612/register-of-interests-form-explanatory-note.pdf> and [https://solentlep.org.uk/media/1265/register\\_of\\_events\\_attended-hospitality\\_and\\_gifts\\_received\\_form.pdf](https://solentlep.org.uk/media/1265/register_of_events_attended-hospitality_and_gifts_received_form.pdf))

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 drawn from amongst the Full Members of the SGF, but shall not be a “P” Director of the Solent LEP. The Full members of the SGF shall elect the Chair by a majority vote of all Full Members, at the start of each municipal year.

The total term of tenure for any Chair will be for a maximum of three consecutive years, after which time a new Chair shall be appointed. For the avoidance of doubt a Chair cannot be re-elected after a three year consecutive term.

Where the Chair is absent from a meeting of the SGF, the full members must elect one of the full members (but who shall not be a “P” Director of Solent LEP) present to Chair the meeting.

### **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, Portsmouth City Council.

The SGF will be supported by the executive team of the Solent LEP, 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. Declarations of Interest**

A Register of Interest will be established and all members will be expected to declare both pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests. In addition members of the Panel will be required to declare any direct or indirect interest in any matter to be considered at a meeting of the Panel under a standing item. Where a matter is under consideration in which a member has declared a specific interest, i.e. where a decision made by the Panel could bring an advantage to that individual, his/her organisation or business, that member shall not participate in discussion, or voting, and shall not be counted in the quorum for that item. It shall be for the other members present to determine whether the interest is such that the member should withdraw from the meeting.

Others attending meetings of the Panel, whether as a guest or officer of the Solent LEP or Local Authorities in the area, shall declare any direct, or indirect interest in any matter which is to be considered at a meeting. It shall be for the members of the Panel to determine whether the interest is such that the person should withdraw. In a case where the secretary to the meeting declares a direct or indirect interest in any matter to be considered at the meeting and in the event they should withdraw, another shall be appointed to clerk for that item.

The minutes of meetings of the Panel will record any declarations of interest made, and whether the person withdrew from the meeting for that item.

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

The Solent LEP has established 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. A copy of this policy is available at:

[https://solentlep.org.uk/media/1353/solent\\_lep\\_enquiry\\_and\\_complaints\\_policy\\_-\\_1811\\_14\\_.pdf](https://solentlep.org.uk/media/1353/solent_lep_enquiry_and_complaints_policy_-_1811_14_.pdf)

## 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
- Legal Advisor from the accountable body of the Solent LEP

#### Invited Members

- University representative from the Higher Education sector
- College representative from the Further Education sector
- Representative of Business Organisation Representative Organisations
- Trade Union Representative
- Voluntary and Community Sector representative
- Government Agencies (e.g. Highways Agency, Network Rail, Environment Agency, Skills Funding Agency)
- BIS
- 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.