



Solent LEP Office  
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Portsmouth  
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13<sup>th</sup> September 2018

Clean Air Zone Consultation  
**TRANSACTIONS & UNIVERSAL SERVICES**  
Southampton City Council  
Civic Centre  
Southampton  
SO14 7LY

Sent by email to: [yourcity.yoursay@southampton.gov.uk](mailto:yourcity.yoursay@southampton.gov.uk)

Dear Sir / Madam,

**Re: Southampton City Council and New Forest District Council Clean Air Zone Consultation**

The Solent Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEP) has read, with interest, the documentation published by the City Council on the Clean Air Zone consultation and is grateful for your invitation to the LEP to respond.

Since their establishment in 2010, LEPs have been integral to economic growth across England. Locally, the Solent LEP, led by influential private and public sector leaders, acting as champions for the area's economic success, provides the strategic economic direction for the Solent area. The Board has a combined investment programme of around half a billion pounds, which is improving productivity across the local economy to benefit people and communities, with the aim of creating more inclusive economies.

In reading the published documentation supporting the Clean Air Zone consultation, it is clear that action is required to accelerate improvement of nitrogen dioxide concentrations to ensure that residents of the city and the wider area are not exposed to poor air quality and related health implications. It is also clear that that considerable good practice to realise this improvement is underway, and that there is considerable potential to innovate further and place Southampton at the forefront of environmental innovation.

For example, the Southampton Sustainable Distribution Centre is proving successful in consolidating loads, reducing journeys, and providing efficiencies. The Port of Southampton has been successful in decreasing the number of containers transported to / from the Port by road to around 60%, demonstrating successful modal shift. Southampton's Container Terminal, operated by DP World Southampton, has been at the forefront of UK port logistics, implementing a 'smart' vehicle booking system to maximise the efficiency of the movement of containers by road.

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More recently, the Port has published an Air Quality Strategy, which commits to Southampton being the first UK Port to install shore power technology for cruise vessels by 2020. In addition, the Port have new data coming on stream that will improve understanding and the targeting of mitigation measures.

It is recognised that there are other aspects that need to be considered when looking at air quality, and road transport, and the high level of car dependency is also a contributor. In this regard it is recognised that the City Council has been investing in mode shift for several years, and the LEP has been pleased to have co-invested with the City Council in transport improvements to encourage mode shift at Station Quarter North. In addition, it is also recognised that private sector bus operators have invested heavily over recent years to transform the bus fleet operating within and around the city.

However, as set out in the LEP's [Strategic Transport Investment Plan](#), there is a pressing need for a transformational mass transit solution to bring forward the necessary step-change in travel behaviour, raise productivity, unlock the growth potential of the Solent economy, build inclusive and connected communities, and improve air quality. The case for this is heightened by the recent congestion league table published by the National Infrastructure Commission, which places Portsmouth/Southampton as the fourth most congested area in the UK (outside London).

The LEP, therefore, is keen to demonstrate a willingness to take forward this critical air quality agenda in a supportive way that does deliver on the objective of clean air in the city and wider area, whilst optimising growth opportunities and strengthening our key economic assets, through environmental innovation and the adoption of new technologies to create local jobs.

As noted above, the area has already demonstrated environmental innovation to reduce road congestion, improve air quality, and the operations of our economic assets such as the Port of Southampton in a more efficient and sustainable way. Moreover, there are firm commitments and a strong willingness in place across the broad spectrum of partners to go further. In recognition of this, there is an opportunity to convene this collective appetite and intelligence to develop something very special, and establish Southampton as the world-leading city of environmental innovation that both delivers on air quality requirements, and enables our key economic assets and sector strengths to flourish. In this regard, the LEP would like to play a full and active role in working with the City Council and Port of Southampton to convene partners and provide funding to map out a pathway to realise this ambition.

This timing is right, as the recent Government publication, [Strengthened Local Enterprise Partnerships](#), which sets out a new enhanced role for LEPs, invites LEPs to develop Local Industrial Strategies that will provide distinctive and ambitious long-term visions of how a place



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will maximise its contribution to UK productivity. These should include a focus on the foundations of productivity and identify priorities across Ideas, People, Infrastructure, Business Environment and Places. Underpinning this, Local Industrial Strategies must ensure the benefits of growth are realised by all and that there are the right conditions for prosperous communities in an area, which, of course, includes a high quality of place.

The challenge is to keep innovating and investing in innovative and clean technologies. Southampton can be the laboratory where new technologies are invented, tested and applied in cooperation with businesses, the public sector, and universities - we have the skills and talent. This can ensure that these new technologies attract new companies and new investments to our region as well as creating new, and safeguarding existing, high quality jobs, in what is an uncertain period economically. Following on from this, the Port of Southampton is a significant asset for the UK and has established a strong competitive position to support UK trade and, as we exit the European Union, it will be important that this position is not unintentionally compromised.

In closing, we therefore, reach out to the City Council to pause on its proposals to implement the Clean Air Zone charging regime, and offer our support to work with the Council and local partners to establish Southampton as the world-leading city of environmental innovation that enhances the competitiveness and productivity of our key economic assets whilst ensuring a high quality of environment for those that live, work and visit this great southern city.

Should you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact Stuart Baker, Head of Local Growth at the Solent LEP on 023 92688676 / [stuart.baker@solentlep.org.uk](mailto:stuart.baker@solentlep.org.uk).

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Gary Jeffries".

Gary Jeffries  
Chairman, Solent Local Enterprise  
Partnership

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Richard Soper".

Richard Soper  
Chairman, Solent LEP Land, Property and  
Infrastructure Advisory Panel

Cc: Councillor Christopher Hammond, SCC  
Councillor Barry Rickman, NFDC  
Richard Crouch, SCC  
Bob Jackson, NFDC

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