



**SOLENT
LOCAL
ENTERPRISE
PARTNERSHIP**

Solent Local Enterprise Partnership Meeting of the Board of Directors

Held on Friday 2 February 2024 at 09:00 - 11:00 via MS Teams

Present	In Attendance
Brooke Hoskins	Jack Elias (DLUHC)
David Youngs	James Fitzgerald (Portsmouth City Council, as the Accountable Body)
Edward Heron	Lloyd Clark (Portsmouth City Council, as the Accountable Body)
Graham Barnetson	Nicola Twiddy (LEP Executive)
Graham Galbraith	Peter Baulf (Portsmouth City Council, as the Accountable Body)
Julie Jones-Evans	Stuart Baker (LEP Executive)
Lorna Fielker	Richard Turl (DLUHC)
Nick Loader	
Rachael Randall (Chair)	Guests
Richard Jones	Luke Bonnici - Lichfields (For Item 5a only)
Steve Pitt	Andrew Palmer & Amy Lewis - CT Consultants (Item 5b only)
Apologies	
Alex Rennie	
Jo Sawford	
Paula Swain	
Salli Shapcott	

Item	ACTION
<p>1. Welcome and Introduction The Chair welcomed all to the meeting.</p> <p>Lorna Fielker as the new Leader of Southampton City Council was welcomed to the Board meeting and round table introductions took place.</p> <p>Apologies for Absence Apologies were noted from Alex Rennie, Jo Sawford, Paula Swain and Salli Shapcott.</p>	

<p>2.</p>	<p>A. Notes of the last meeting held on 8 December 2023 The minutes from the Board meeting and strategy session on 8 December 2023 were Agreed.</p> <p>B. Matters Arising and Declarations of Interest</p> <p><u>Matters Arising</u> The following matters arising were raised: Page 5 - Project variations are being finalised and an update was provided on the latest status of one of the projects. Page 3 - LEP integration will be discussed under Item 4 at this meeting.</p> <p>All other matters will be covered as part of the meeting.</p> <p><u>Declarations of Interest</u> The following interests were noted ahead of the meeting:</p> <p><u>Edward Heron, Julie Jones-Evans, Lorna Fielker and Steve Pitt</u> in relation to the update on local authority engagement under item 4.</p> <p><u>Graham Barnetson and Stuart Baker</u> as Maritime UK Solent Ltd Directors</p>	
<p>3.</p>	<p>HM Government Update Richard Turl provided the HM Government update as follows -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integration Plans have been submitted and approval by Directors is awaited and the intention is to write out in early Feb to confirm the plans - hoped within the next week. • 42 new Business Board across the UK, each looking to receive £230K - £240K subject to a business case being approved. • The Upper Tier Local Authorities and Accountable Bodies will have an Assurance Framework to work to. • Growth Hubs - waiting for Department of Business & Trade to confirm geography and funding - expected to be issued early February. • Levelling Up Fund Round 3 - Gosport submission is due to be submitted for verification next week. • Long term plans for towns - Ryde on the Isle of Wight has been successful in securing funding. • More Level 4 Devolution deals are expected to be announced. • Annual Performance Review papers have been issued this week which will be conducted as a paper-based exercise this year. (received yesterday) <p>Colleagues at DLUHC would like to remain as observers on the Solent Partners Board and / or any separate boards established by upper tiered Local Authorities (UTLAs) and their business boards.</p> <p>There was a request to DLUHC to get clarity on the existing CEC contracts.</p>	<p align="right">DLUHC</p>
<p>4.</p>	<p>Update on LEP Integration and Transition to Solent Partners Richard Jones gave an update on the LEP Integration and gave a presentation covering:</p> <p>The LEP Network Update on the national landscape, shows all areas value LEP functions and want them to continue. At present four models are emerging - already integrated,</p>	

	<p>functions integrated into (and potentially divided) by UTLAs, a wholly owned UTLA company and an independent company.</p> <p>There was a recap on the position at the December strategy session which had Solent Partners as a wholly owned UTLA company. Following meetings with the UTLA, the revised position for Portsmouth, Southampton and Isle of Wight is a preference for a commission-based model. This is the model which is now included in papers going to the IOW, PCC and SCC Cabinet meetings for approval.</p> <p>The Board had a discussion on this item and comments and questions were asked. All confirmed that it is the intention to proceed with this and independent legal advice is awaited by the authorities. The proposed Solent Business Forum function, purpose and structure was clarified.</p> <p>The ongoing considerations for Solent Partners were highlighted covering delivery, governance and financials.</p> <p>The Board discussed the revised proposed structure and implications. There were particular concerns from the Board on -</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The potential impact of a commissioning relationship with the uncertainty that could bring for longer term planning, interventions, employment of staff etc. 2. The structure of the Solent Business Forum which will, under the presented structure become the main means of industry engagement, and therefore needs to be broadened beyond industry representative groups. 3. The need to get clarity and resolution quickly recognising that decisions on new arrangements are expected to be finalised by March 2024. <p>The Board:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agreed to reconvene the Governance Working Group to review the Solent Partners governance structure in the context of the revised proposals. • Noted that a further update will be provided at the next meeting. 	<p>Executive</p>
<p>5.</p>	<p><u>a. Solent Economic Profile Update</u></p> <p>Board members received an update on the commission with Lichfield to update the Solent Economic Evidence base at the Board Meeting in December 2023. Luke Bonnici from Lichfields, joined the meeting to present on progress to date. A high-level overview SWOT analysis was provided. Case studies that can highlight low carbon, maritime and creative industries are being developed further to be included in the report. A comparison with 2019 was provided.</p> <p>Comments were provided on the SWOT analysis and it was suggested that the following are included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Biosphere designation of IoW and New Forest - Housing crisis - The tourism offer for the region and the recruitment challenges - The aging population, the care provision need to support and opportunities linked to IT 	

Next steps

Some of the nuances will be developed into the report and tourism will be added as a case study.

A first draft of the report is expected next week for comments with the aim of finalising the report in mid-late February.

If any Board Members have any further comments, please provide to Stuart Baker or Luke Bonnici.

The Boards thanks were passed to Luke Bonnici and he left the meeting (10:52)

The final draft of the report is scheduled to be considered by the LEP Board at the March 2024 meeting. Following its agreement by the LEP Board, the final report and evidence base will be shared with Solent Partners and local authority colleagues and it is expected that the updated economic profile will form a core element of the evidence base used to inform the update to the Solent economic strategy during 2024/25.

The Board:

- **Noted** the update in relation to the Solent socio-economic report.
- **Provided** feedback to shape the update to the Solent socio-economic report.

b. Solent Cultural Plan Update

During 2023, the Solent LEP Board agreed to work in partnership with Arts Council England (ACE) to develop a Solent Cultural Plan. The work is co-funded by the LEP and ACE who have co-commissioned CT Consultants to develop the strategy.

Work to develop the supporting evidence base has progressed significantly and Andrew Palmer and Amy Lewis from CT Consultants joined the meeting to present to the Board.

Lorna Fielker left the meeting (10:56)

The presentation covered a SWOT analysis, cultural place wheel showing the best places for positive impact change and next steps - the emerging priorities and what we need now.

Edward Heron left the meeting (11:02)

Questions and Comments were taken from the Board. Noting the cross mapping of industries that takes place and how they cross pollinate to drive the economy.

The Boards thanks were passed to Andrew Palmer and Amy Lewis and they left the meeting (11:11)

The Board:

- **Noted** the updates on the Solent Economic Profile and Solent Cultural Plan evidence base, and;
- **Provided** feedback to inform the preparation of the draft reports for consideration at the March Board meeting.

6.	Finance and Governance Update Due to time constraints this item will be taken to the MUK Solent Board meeting next week and then a written update will be provided to the LEP Board for their consideration. The Board received an update on the underspend in the 2023/24 budget. The Board: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Agreed that any underspends on the 2023/24 funding allocation can be carried forward by Maritime UK Solent to 2024/25. Graham Barnetson and Stuart Baker noted an interest in the item and did not participate in decision making.	Executive AB & MUK Solent
7.	General updates from Board Leads – for note The update was taken as read and noted by the Board.	
8.	Any other business No further business, so the meeting was closed.	

Meeting closed at 11:15