



Solent Freeport Consortium Limited
Chief Executive Recruitment Pack

June 2022

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Foreword

The Solent has always been the Nation's Global Gateway, and is now becoming even more prominent as one of only eight regions in England selected by the Government to be a Freeport. Freeports are an important part of the UK's post-Covid economic recovery; the Solent Freeport will unlock billions of pounds' worth of investment and create tens of thousands of new jobs. It is universally backed and has the potential to transform productivity in the Solent to benefit not only our communities but also the whole of the UK.

Freeports will play a key role in delivering on the Government's levelling up agenda, bringing prosperity to some of our important coastal communities through jobs and investment. The Solent proposition, through links to three world-class universities and as host to national research assets, will also catalyse an innovation revolution in maritime, autonomy and green growth.

We believe the Solent Freeport is a 'once in a lifetime' opportunity to maximize our geographic advantage in a highly competitive global market and forge new trading relationships with the world.

The Solent Freeport Consortium has reached a significant milestone in submitting the Outline Business Case to Government for approval. It is now bringing forward an exciting opportunity to lead the Solent Freeport Board at this critical development stage and looking to recruit to the high profile position of Chief Executive of the Solent Freeport.

The Chief Executive of the Solent Freeport is an incredibly exciting and important role, not just within the region, but nationally. As our Chief Executive you will build on the rapid and significant progress we have made on the Solent Freeport proposition and our strategic direction, and working with partners from across the public and private sector you will provide visible leadership to deliver the aspirations of our region and secure the economic benefits the Freeport will bring for years to come.

Brian Johnson
Solent Freeport Chair
Solent Freeport

Introduction

Freeports are a flagship government programme designed to play an important part in the UK's post-Covid economic recovery and contribute to realising the levelling up agenda, bringing jobs, investment and prosperity to some of the most deprived communities across the four nations of the UK with targeted and effective support.

The Solent Freeport is led by the Solent Freeport Consortium Ltd (SFCL), a company limited by guarantee, incorporated on 15 March 2021. Details on the Governance arrangements for the Company are set out in the Company's Articles of Association, which are available **here**. The company has been established in response to the Government announcing the Solent as one of just eight Freeports in England at the March 2021 budget.

All Freeports are required to complete a 'set-up' phase for achieving Freeport designation, culminating in the approval of a Full Business Case (FBC). The Board of the Solent Freeport Consortium Ltd have a very strong ambition to ensure the Solent Freeport is operational in the first wave of Freeports and have already submitted a Full Business Case to Government with a view to securing all formal designations during 2022.

In line with this commitment to bringing forward the Solent Freeport at pace, the Board are now inviting applications for the role of Chief Executive of the Solent Freeport Consortium Ltd. Further information, including how to apply for this exciting and high-profile role is included in this document. A full Role Description and Person Specification can be found **here**.

Further information in relation to Freeports can be found at: www.gov.uk

Further information on the Solent Freeport can be found at: www.solentfreeport.com



Section 1:

Applying to become the Solent Freeport Consortium Ltd Chief Executive

1A: The role of the Solent Freeport Consortium Ltd Chief Executive

The Chief Executive will work in partnership with the Solent Freeport Consortium Limited Board to provide leadership, vision and strategic direction to the Solent Freeport Consortium Limited. The post holder will act as an ambassador for the Solent Freeport and wider Solent area to ensure it is fully engaged with its stakeholders and communities and fulfilling its role. The Chief Executive is pivotal for the sustained and ongoing development of Solent Freeport's performance, its leadership and its culture.

The post holder will build and maintain a strong and committed Executive Team to equip the Solent Freeport with expert skills and agile business acumen to relentlessly pursue brilliance. They will also be a role model for individuals personally aligned to the betterment of the Solent economy and stakeholder and partner satisfaction through driving transformational change across the organisation, local communities and the wider Solent Freeport area.

The Chief Executive will develop, alongside the Freeport Chair and the Board, the strategic direction of the Solent Freeport. This will include utilising the expertise and knowledge of board members, Freeport company members and key local and national partners such as local government, government departments, business and academia. They will therefore be a key leader working with other senior leaders across the public sector, business, academia, funding beneficiaries, and regulators to ensure seamless partnership pathways and working.

At the core of the role, as the Accountable Officer and Head of paid service, the Chief Executive is responsible for ensuring the Freeport delivers on its commitment to be a national hub for global trade and investment; promote regeneration and job creation; and establish a hotbed for innovation. These commitments must be delivered whilst at the

same time ensuring the Freeport meets its statutory obligations, corporate duties and local accountability and transparency requirements.

The post holder will serve as the Chief Executive of Solent Freeport Consortium Limited and sit on the Board of the Company as the sole Executive Director. In partnership with the Board, the Chief Executive is ultimately responsible for the success of the Solent Freeport, and will:

- Provide vision, direction and ambition through inspirational leadership and strategic management for Solent Freeport Consortium Limited. This will include management of the company, its governance structure and responsibilities against wider corporate frameworks and HM Government Assurance requirements. Support for the Board will be extensive and include specific responsibilities in relation to risk management, as well as work to establish and support key committees
- Discharge the Board's responsibilities in relation to key areas of customs and tax site delivery, including the Freeport's role in relation to site specific agreements with ratings authorities and landowners, and;
- Management of key funding streams, including the management of a seed capital funding programme and retained business rates. This will include supporting the Freeport Board and investment committee in the development of pooled rates and investment ready project , as well as discharging the Freeport's responsibilities under its Memorandum of Understanding with key partners.

A full role description and person specification can be found **here**.

1B: Other Information

Remuneration

Salary Band: £130,000 - £134,000 (includes basic salary of £110,126 - £119,333 and market supplement payment of £14,545 to provide a maximum salary of £133,878).

Additional and exceptional duty payments will also be considered based on performance in the role against defined annual targets and responsibilities in accordance with the additional and exceptional duty payment policy of the accountable body.

Location: This post will be home-based in the first instance and will require regional travel and a requirement to represent the Solent Freeport at national meetings and on occasions internationally.

Budget responsibility: in line with the delegations with authority to enter into commitments up to an unlimited amount (but within the overall budget allocation for the Solent Freeport Consortium Limited, currently circa £940,000 for 2022/23) in a single transaction.

Conflict of interest

The Chief Executive will be expected to adhere to normal conflict of interest arrangements in accordance with the **National Local Growth Assurance Framework**.

Conduct

The Chief Executive role is high profile and responsible for decision-making in relation to significant sums of public money. Therefore, in addition to usual requirements under Company Law, all Directors are expected to follow conduct themselves in accordance with **'The seven principles of public life'**.



Section 2:

Information for individuals interested in applying to become the SFCL Chief Executive

2A: How to apply

If you would like to apply to become the Solent Freeport Consortium Ltd Chief Executive, please send us:

- A 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 how you meet each of the person specification requirements listed in the person specification.
- Your curriculum vitae (CV)

The preferred method of application is online at www.berwickpartners.co.uk/86292

If you are unable to apply online please email your application to response.manager@berwickpartners.co.uk

All applications will receive an automated response.

All candidates are also requested to complete an online Equal Opportunities Monitoring Form which will be found at the end of the application process.

For detailed information on how Berwick Partners process your personal data, please review their privacy policy [here](#)

In line with GDPR, we ask that you do NOT send us any information that can identify children or any of your Sensitive Personal Data (racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, trade union membership, data concerning health or sex life and sexual orientation, genetic and/or biometric data) in your CV and application documentation. Following this notice, any inclusion

of your Sensitive Personal Data in your CV/application documentation will be understood by us as your express consent to process this information going forward.

Please also remember to not mention anyone's information or details (e.g. referees) who have not previously agreed to their inclusion.

If you have any queries or would like more information in regard to this document, please contact:

**Marek Dobrowolski, Partner, on
0121 654 5975 (direct dial);
07793 529 576 (mobile) or email
marek.dobrowolski@berwickpartners.co.uk**

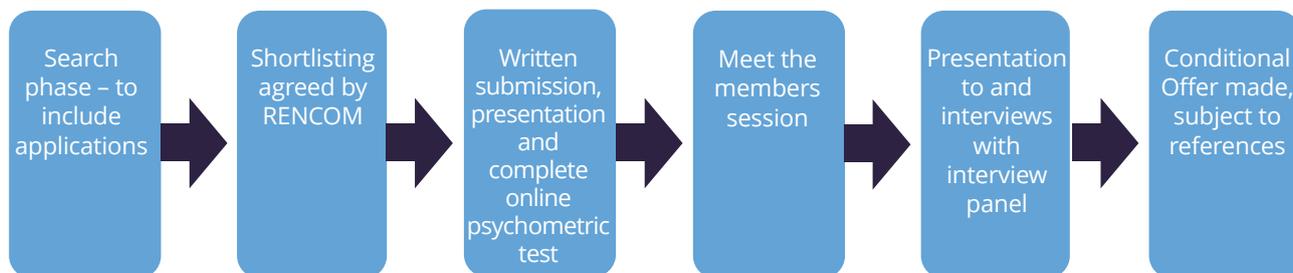
Please note that documents submitted as part of your Chief Executive application will be shared with Solent Freeport Consortium Ltd Remuneration, Employment and Nominations Committee (RENCOM) members, the Solent Freeport Consortium Limited Company Secretary and Portsmouth City Council (as accountable body to the Solent Freeport) in order to assess the eligibility of your application and shortlist candidates against the person specification.

Your covering letter and CV will only be used to ensure eligibility against the criteria published in this document and inform the shortlisting for the role.

**PLEASE NOTE THE CLOSING DATE FOR
APPLICATIONS IS 23:59 ON
31 AUGUST 2022**

2B: Process

The following diagram provides a summary of the process the Solent Freeport Consortium Ltd intends to follow in securing the appointment of a new Chief Executive. Further details in relation to each stage are provided below.



Stage 1: Search phase to include applications

Applications are invited until 31 August 2022. Solent Freeport Consortium Ltd has enlisted the support of Executive Search agency Berwick Partners to supplement the advertising and promotion of the role.

In addition to the information provided in this document, the Solent Freeport Consortium Ltd would also welcome informal discussions with any individual interested in applying for the role.

If you would like to speak with the Chair of the Solent Freeport to discuss the role further ahead of applying, please contact us using the details provided in section 3. Please note that any potential applicants are asked to contact us well in advance of the deadline in order to ensure a call can be arranged.

Stage 2: Shortlisting

All applications received before the deadline will undergo eligibility checks and be shortlisted by our Remuneration, Employment and Nominations Committee (RENCOM) against the criteria outlined in the person specification. All applicants will be notified of the outcome of these eligibility checks.

Stage 3: Written Submission, Presentation and Psychometric Testing

All shortlisted applicants will be asked to provide a written submission. In addition, there will be a requirement to complete an online psychometric test and to submit a presentation in advance of the interview. Details in relation to the specific requirements of the written submission and the presentation title will be shared directly with shortlisted candidates.

Stage 4: Meet the members session

All shortlisted applicants will be required to meet with the Board of Solent Freeport Consortium Limited and representatives from the Associate Members of the Company. Further details in relation to the session will be provided directly to shortlisted applicants.

Stage 5: Interview

Shortlisted applicants will be required to attend an interview, which will include a 15 minute formal presentation to the panel. Further details in relation to the interview format will be provided directly to shortlisted applicants.

Stage 6: Conditional offer

The successful candidate will receive a conditional offer, subject to references. References will be requested at this stage and progress to formal offer will be subject to satisfactory review of references.

2C: Timetable

The following outlines the target timetable:

Date	Action
13 June 2022	Application window opens
31 August 2022	Application window closes
16 September 2022	Applicants notified of outcome of shortlisting process
w/c 26 September 2022	Shortlisted candidates to meet with Solent Freeport Consortium Limited Members
29 September 2022	Deadline for shortlisted applicants to submit written submission, presentation and psychometric testing
w/c 3 October 2022	Interviews

Please note that Solent Freeport Consortium Ltd fully intends to adhere to the above timetable. However, Solent Freeport Consortium Ltd reserves the right to depart from this timetable and will notify all candidates of any change to the timetable during the process.

Section 3: Contact Information

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

Marek Dobrowolski, Partner, on
0121 654 5975 (direct dial);
07793 529 576 (mobile) or email
marek.dobrowolski@berwickpartners.co.uk

Ruth Hernandez-Turner on
0121 654 5936 (direct dial);
07811 976 392 (mobile) or email
ruth.hernandezturner@berwickpartners.co.uk