



**Solent Freeport Consortium Limited Skills Forum Chairs
Recruitment Pack and information on How to Volunteer**

January 2023

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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 ("SFCL") has reached a significant milestone in submitting the Outline Business Case to Government for approval.

As Chair of one of the three tax site (Dunsbury, Navigator Quarter and Southampton Water) Skills Forums, you will represent the Forum and be a member of the Solent Skills Advisory Panel ("SAP"), which is managed by the Solent LEP, to help deliver the aspirations of our region and secure the benefits the Freeport will bring for years to come.

Brian Johnson
Solent Freeport Chair
Solent Freeport Consortium Limited

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 Limited: 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.

Solent Freeport is projected to deliver over 16,000 jobs directly in the Solent, across a range of jobs and skills levels. It is recognised that the scale of Freeport job creation will require targeted intervention to up-skill/re-skill residents to be able to take advantage of the job opportunities created, and to expand the Solent's existing skills infrastructure to be able to support a suitably skilled talent base for the Solent Freeport.

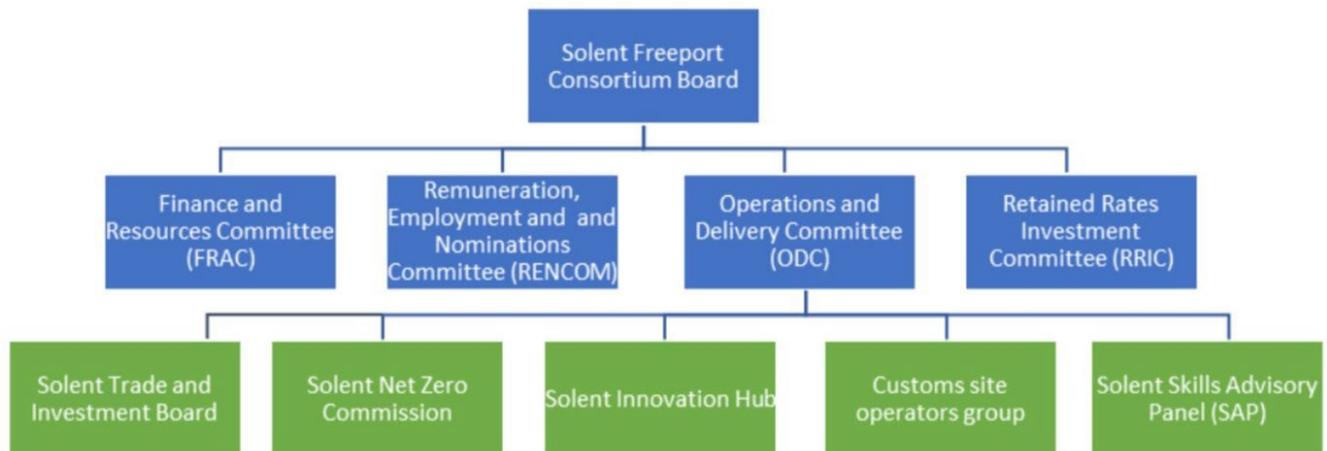
A skills and workforce development plan has been produced to support a world-class talent base across the Solent region, equipped with the skills and workforce capabilities to drive transformational economic growth and level up our important coastal communities. The plan considers:

- The current labour market
- Future job creation and skills gaps
- Existing local action to address skills gaps
- Freeport priorities and actions
- Delivery
- Monitoring and evaluation

Job creation will inevitably be phased over time as sites come forward for development and businesses are established across our Freeport sites. This also means that skills needs will change over time and as new technologies are pioneered within the Solent Freeport, so we envisage a flexible skills response that can adapt to evolving employer requirements.

The Plan commits to establishing a series of Skills Networks to bring together Solent employers and education providers across key sectors to tackle skills challenges and evolving employer requirements and this work will be led by the Solent Skills Advisory Panel (SAP) who report into the Solent Freeport Operations and Delivery Committee. 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

Governance Structure



A core component of the plan is to establish The Solent Freeport Skills Charter. This will set out the overall principles and commitments that will be delivered by the Freeport in respect of skills and learning. It represents a critical mechanism for realising our ambitions to kick start regeneration and levelling-up of the Solent region through a dedicated focus on upskilling residents and developing their capacity and capability to take-up and benefit from the transformational economic opportunities that will be unlocked through Freeport investment.

Through the Freeport Skills Charter the SAP will:

- a. set the overall skills strategy and action plan for the Solent Freeport based on latest evidence, intelligence and evolving employer requirements; and
- b. review the key mechanisms for leveraging private sector contributions towards funding our skills and employability ambitions for the Solent Freeport.

The creation of skills forums for each tax site will underpin the work of the SAP and Skills Charter, bringing together end users, landowner(s), skills providers, Local authorities, Careers and Enterprise Company, and government agencies to ensure appropriate skills interventions can be brought forward. These fora will oversee wrap-around support in relation to Careers Information Advice and Guidance, employment opportunities, business engagement, apprenticeships programmes, and skills / training support. They will also oversee the key skills outputs at each tax site.

Each Tax Site Skills Forum will have its own charter, however, in broad terms, the purpose of the Skills Forums will be to:

- Provide advice to the Freeport through the Solent Skills Advisory Panel and Freeport operations and Delivery Committee on the implementation of the Solent Freeport Skills and Workforce Development Plan and Skills Charter.
- Develop a statement of skills need for the employers on the relevant tax site.

- Provide advice on the human capital investments required to respond to the statement of skills need for the relevant tax site.
- Provide advice to the Retained Rates Investment Committee (RRIC) on the development and delivery of skills project proposals (on the tax site) seeking funding from the Freeport retained business rates.

Section 1: Volunteering to become a Chair of the Solent Freeport Consortium Limited Skills Forums

1A: The role of the Solent Freeport Consortium Limited Skills Forum Chair

There are 3 Chair vacancies available (Dunsbury, Navigator Quarter and Southampton Water). Please see the Terms of Reference for each Skills Forum in Appendix 1 of this document.

The creation of Skills Forums for each tax site will underpin the work of the Solent Skills Advisory Panel and Skills Charter, bringing together end users, landowners, skills providers, local authorities, Careers and Enterprise Company, and government agencies to ensure appropriate skills interventions can be brought forward. These fora will oversee wrap-around support in relation to Careers Information Advice and Guidance, employment opportunities, business engagement, apprenticeships programmes, and skills / training support. They will also oversee the key skills outputs at each tax site.

- The Chairs must be from the private sector.
- The Chairs must not have a vested interest in, or a material business relationship with, land or property within the relevant Tax site.
- The Chair will represent the Forum and become a member of the Solent Skills Advisory Panel, with a requirement to also attend SAP meetings.

1B: Other Information

Time commitment

- Each Tax Site Skills Forum will meet a minimum of four times per year, and occasional additional meetings may be convened to respond directly to work requirements. Panel membership may involve travel throughout the Solent area to attend panel meetings and as the post is of a voluntary nature, time, travel and other expenses will not be remunerated.
- As noted above, each Chair of the Skills Forums will become a member of the Skills Advisory Panel. The SAP will meet a minimum of three times a year, and occasional additional meetings may be convened to respond directly to work requirements. Panel membership may involve travel throughout the Solent area to attend panel meetings and as the post is of a voluntary nature, time, travel and other expenses will not be remunerated.

- Unless otherwise agreed, notice of each meeting confirming the venue, time and date, together with an agenda of items to be discussed, shall be forwarded to each member of the fora, and any other person required to attend, a minimum of 5 working days before the date of the meeting. Meetings can be convened electronically or via video/telephone conferencing as required. Supporting papers shall be shared with fora members and other attendees as appropriate, via a secure file sharing platform at the same time as the meeting details.

Conflict of interest

All SFCL Panel members will be expected to adhere to normal conflict of interest arrangements in accordance with the [National Local Growth Assurance Framework](#).

Section 2: How to Volunteer to become a Chair of one of the Skills Forums

2A: How to Volunteer

If you would like to put yourself forward for one of the roles, please send us the following documentation:

- A CV, and;
- A covering email outlining clearly which tax site Skills Forum you are applying for and any additional information that you want to provide.

Please note that documents submitted as part of your application will be shared with the SFCL Executive, skills lead for the relevant local authority within which the relevant tax site resides and the Chair of the Skills Advisory Panel to assess your application. We will hold these documents confidentially.

If you would like an informal discussion about the roles before applying, please contact us via info@solentfreeport.com and we will arrange for someone to call you at a time that suits you.

Expressions of Interest should be submitted via email, no later than 23:59 on **25 January 2023** to info@solentfreeport.com

All expressions of interest received before the deadline will be considered by the SFCL Executive, the Chair of the Skills Advisory Panel and relevant skills leads for the relevant Local Authority areas.

All candidates will be contacted after the closing date with notification of the next steps in the fora membership process.

The Solent Freeport Consortium Limited expects to agree appointments following a desk-based review of applications received against the published criteria in this document. However, the SFCL reserves the right to invite candidates to interview to support the application process.

PLEASE NOTE THE CLOSING DATE FOR APPLICATIONS IS 23:59 ON 25 JANUARY 2023

2B: Timetable

The following outlines the target timetable:

Action	Date
Application window opens	16 January 2023
Application window closes	25 January 2023
Applicants notified of outcome of shortlisting process	w/c 30 January 2023

Please note that Solent Freeport Consortium Limited fully intends to adhere to the above timetable. However, Solent Freeport Consortium Limited 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:

Should you have any enquiries in relation to any of the information included in this document, please contact the Solent Freeport Consortium Limited by email at: info@solentfreeport.com

Terms of Reference

Click [here](#) for Dunsbury Tax Site Terms of Reference

Click [here](#) for Navigator Quarter Tax Site Terms of Reference

Click [here](#) for Southampton Water Tax Site Terms of Reference

Click [here](#) for Solent Skills Advisory Panel Terms of Reference