Southampton Economic Development Action Plan
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The Southampton Economic Development Action plan (SEDAP) has been prepared by The Southampton Partnership’s Economy and Enterprise Board (EEB) and will contribute to the achievement of the vision for the city set out in the City of Southampton Strategy.

Key elements of Southampton Partnership’s vision are to:

• Create a city that has learning and innovation at its heart
• Develop a dynamic business environment
• Encourage imaginative arts and cultural opportunities; and
• Create a unique sense of place

The SEDAP does not exist in isolation and it has been prepared to complement other Southampton Partnership plans that are focused upon: increasing educational attainment amongst young people providing them with tools to achieve economic independence and future prosperity; reducing poverty and improving the quality of life within disadvantaged neighbourhoods and communities, improving the health and wellbeing of Southampton residents, reducing crime, improving the safety of young people and children, tackling anti-social behaviour and fostering stronger communities, encouraging visitors and improving the infrastructure and facilities.

The Plan will also contribute to the achievement of the ambitious plans set out by the Partnership for Urban South Hampshire to improve economic performance in the sub-region between now and 2026.

Southampton’s strengths and opportunities

Southampton has many assets which will ultimately help to increase the employment rate; stimulate business development and growth; and therefore achieve economic success for the city and its residents

Southampton has:

• A great geographic position – for attracting both leisure visitors and business and therefore investment
• A strong economy - in 2006 Southampton’s economy was worth £4,756 million (28% more than in 2001)
• 2 successful universities – The University of Southampton and Southampton Solent University that together produce around 6,500 graduates each year and are engaged in world class research
• Recognition as the regional centre for central southern England
• Extensive development opportunities - development sites either recently completed, under construction, or where planning permission has been granted have a total development value of over £1,000 million and the potential to create approximately 9,300 jobs; this will give considerable opportunity for Southampton residents to find jobs in a range of sectors and occupations including retail, leisure and hospitality, business services and construction.
• Expertise in the marine sector (in the city's businesses, educational institutions and workforce) will produce growth in this field with potential for new skilled jobs. The Port of Southampton has published a draft Masterplan setting out a vision for port expansion up until 2030.
• Significant employment sectors, such as in distribution, tourism, banking and finance related activities
• Nearly 114,000 people in employment, creating approx 11,000 to 22,000 job opportunities each year from staff turnover
• Recognition as the cruise capital of northern Europe - the Port of Southampton now has 4 cruise terminals
• National and international transport links - improvements to the rail infrastructure between Southampton and the Midlands will be carried out over the next two years and will contribute to the growth of the Port of Southampton; Southampton Airport has plans to increase passenger numbers to 6 million by 2030, and thus generate 4,000 jobs

Southampton’s challenges
But the city does face challenges which need addressing in order to reach its potential:
• Low levels of educational attainment and skills acquisition amongst those of working age
• Low employment rates
• A significant proportion of young people (16-18 year olds) who are not in education, employment or training (NEETs)
• Low levels of business start up
• Lower proportions of city residents in higher order jobs
• Low wage levels amongst city residents in full-time employment
• Relatively low rates of job growth
• Concentration of economic deprivation in specific areas; access to opportunities by those in deprived areas
• As a result of the current economic recession employment in some sectors is expected to decline in the immediate future (public sector budget constraints, collapse of retail chains, contraction in financial services, redundancies in construction industry and its supply chain)
How the challenges will be addressed

To address these challenges and assist in meeting the many opportunities which will arise over the next few years Southampton’s top priorities to be addressed by the Southampton Economic Development Action Plan in the period to 2012 are:

- Reducing significantly the number of children and young people living in poverty
- Developing the curriculum and a full range of learning pathways
- Increasing participation, retention and achievement among young people
- Improving young people’s access to advice and guidance (including a programme of events, visits and communications that improve the quality and relevance of employment information to school pupils, students, parents and carers linking the programme to the school curriculum and education business activity)
- Implementing the Southampton Skills Development Zone that will provide improved access for workless residents and those from priority neighbourhoods to skills and jobs (e.g. apprenticeships)
- Working with partners to introduce skills academies (in the marine, retail and construction sectors)

Priority Two: To reduce worklessness and improve employability

- Assisting people from priority neighbourhoods and poor socio-economic backgrounds to access training and skills opportunities to increase their job potential
- Improving access to support information (e.g. handling debt, child-care)
- Working with employers to recruit people from priority groups (e.g. work trials or tasters, pre employment training, recruitment subsidies)
- Working with partners to assist employees affected by potential redundancies (i.e. holding information awareness sessions in companies where large scale redundancies announced)
- Working with partners to produce redundancy awareness sessions for communities and assist with access to a range of benefit entitlements
- Working with the voluntary sector to develop volunteering opportunities

The EEB partners helping to implement the plan include Business Link, Business Southampton, Southampton & Fareham Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Job Centre Plus, Learning & Skills Council, Southampton City Council, and the South East England Development Agency. They will work with other local, regional and national partners such as the Partnership for Urban South Hampshire to implement this action plan.

The 5 main priorities are being addressed as follows:

Priority One: To increase educational attainment, skills qualifications and employment progression

- Investing in new schools to develop a world class learning infrastructure and environment
- Strengthening employer engagement and work-related learning provision across Southampton and preparing young people for the world of work
Supporting key developments in the city that make it more attractive to residents and businesses and maximise their potential to reduce disadvantage

**Priority Three: To increase enterprise and innovation**
- Developing accommodation for high technology businesses
- Developing accommodation for creative industries
- Promoting innovation and knowledge economy assets of the city (e.g. Southampton Science Park, Innovation Centre at Ocean Village, and Millbrook Technology Campus)
- Developing and supporting the marine sector
- Re-focusing inward investment activity across South Hampshire working with other local authorities, regional and national bodies, higher education, sector consortia and the private sector
- Working to assist business support and advice with Business Link and improve access for businesses and business start-ups (e.g. 1:1 Business Clinics, outreach work via Enterprise Gateway)
- Improving access for local business to public sector and Olympics procurement contracts

**Priority Four: To bring forward employment land and associated infrastructure**
- Progress proposals in the development pipeline (e.g. Northern Above Bar, Watermark WestQuay, West Quay 3, Royal Pier, Centenary Quay Woolston, Mayflower Plaza, East Park Terrace, Ocean Village, Lower High Street, The Gantry)
- Develop and promote Southampton’s office quarter
- Encourage a wider retail offer in Southampton city centre
- Bring forward additional space for warehousing and distribution
- Implement transport/access improvements (e.g. Itchen Bridge, Redbridge Flyover, Junction 5 M27, Bedford Place ‘Walk to Work’)

**Priority Five: To improve city image**
- Coordinate a united approach to marketing the city function amongst partners
- Improve Southampton’s leisure offer (e.g. Northern Above Bar’s Cultural Quarter, Watermark WestQuay, Royal Pier’s Festival Park, heritage museum)
- Improve public realm including signage and wayfinding
- Improve the Old Town offer (e.g. Tudor House Museum & Gardens reopens in 2011; improve signage and streetscene)
- Progress events for 2012 - the Titanic Centenary and the Olympics

**SEDAP will therefore:**
- Improve the economic situation of people who live in the city by increasing qualifications, skills and access to job opportunities
- Stimulate business investment, entrepreneurial activity and growth in Southampton
- Reduce impacts of the economic downturn
- Make Southampton a more prosperous place
- Focus activity on priority neighbourhoods
- Improve infrastructure of the city, including transport facilities which will provide Southampton residents with the ability to easily access jobs (e.g. work is currently being carried out looking at ways to improve links across the M27 between Southampton and the proposed Hedge End Special Development Area)
Southampton’s future

By addressing these challenges, Southampton will have a very positive future and will be seen as a city that:

• Is at the forefront of developing a knowledge based economy
• Develops and attracts successful, creative and innovative businesses, particularly in knowledge based and service industries as well as a thriving health and care sector
• Has an enterprising business community which recognises the contribution they can make to the city experience and which enthusiastically participates in, supports and sponsors activities
• Is an international centre for learning and development, particularly in the marine sector, led by the two Universities, one with its world class reputation for research and innovation and the other as a major centre for vocational and professional learning
• Is a talent magnet, the result of sustained collaboration between universities, colleges, business support services and employers, which is committed to enabling its citizens to develop and attracting new people and enterprise into the city
• Is a city with excellent education from the earliest years through to schools and colleges, which encourages people to value learning throughout their lives
• Is a centre of national excellence for the arts and culture - building on the major strengths of existing venues and collections, and encouraging new ventures
• Is a city that fosters and celebrates creative and media industries, contemporary, visual and performing arts, arts reflecting the city’s communities and arts in education

For a full copy of the plan go to www.southampton-partnership.com

What Now?

The EEB and others are working together to implement the projects set out in the SEDAP.

For further information:
Contact: Jeff Walters, Economic Development Manager, Southampton City Council
Tel: 023 8083 2256
Email: jeff.walters@southampton.gov.uk
This written information is available on request in other formats or languages. Please contact 023 8083 2256 for help.

For more information
Tel: 023 8083 2256 or visit www.southampton-partnership.com