

RECORD OF EXECUTIVE DECISION

Monday, 15 November 2021

Decision No: (CAB 21/22 32741)

DECISION-MAKER:	CABINET
PORTFOLIO AREA:	GROWTH
SUBJECT:	UPDATE ON THE CURRENT SOLENT FREEPORT PROPOSALS AND SUPPORT FOR THE SUBMISSION OF THE OUTLINE BUSINESS CASE (OBC)
AUTHOR:	Matthew Hill

THE DECISION

Having complied with paragraph 15 of the Council's Access to Information Procedure Rules:

- (i) Cabinet supports the strategic submission of the next outline business case (OBC) as a Board Member of Solent Freeport Consortium Limited, on or before the 26 November 2021, as part of National Freeport Programme Application process and to agree an appropriate Site Specific Agreement for the Redbridge (Tax) site.
- (ii) Cabinet raises any issues outlined in this paper over the current Solent Freeport proposals, to then be shared with the Solent Freeport Consortium Limited (SFCL).

REASONS FOR THE DECISION

1. This report is submitted for consideration as a General Exception under paragraph 15 of the Access to Information procedure Rules in Part 4 of the City Council's Constitution, notice having been given to the Chair of the relevant Scrutiny Panel and the Public. The matter requires a decision with the urgency linked to the impending submission of the updated Solent Freeport OBC and given Government's approval process. For these reasons the decision cannot be deferred for inclusion in the next Forward Plan for decision following 28 clear days' notice.
2. The implications of the approval of the Solent Freeport proposal are wide ranging and complex. The approvals process is fast-moving and detailed with several government departments involved and agencies such as BEIS, DLUHC and HMRC.
3. The Solent Freeport partnership is complex with a variety of public and private interests and approvals to be managed in unison, as far as possible. Private sector partners also have significant and

complex decisions to make and further risks may evolve for all partners. The management of risk by the SCFL Board and the Local Authority partners, particularly the Tax and Customs site partners will be important and will need to be offset against the wider economic benefits.

DETAILS OF ANY ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

1. One alternative option is for SCC not to support the emerging Solent Freeport Consortium proposals, however support has been provided to date and with a very challenging approvals process. With most if not all significant approvals being made by government, nationally, SCC not supporting the proposals might only carry limited weight.
2. In future years the Solent Local Authorities might seek to influence the strategic development of the Solent Freeport through a combined or devolved position. At present however the current 'county deal' devolution proposals are at a very early stage of consideration. Any devolution 'package' could support the accelerated delivery of Freeport infrastructure and devolution aside, local authorities will continue to play a key and active role in shaping Freeports and not just in the short-term.

OTHER RELEVANT MATTERS CONCERNING THE DECISION

None.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

None.

CONFIRMED AS A TRUE RECORD

We certify that the decision this document records was made in accordance with the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2000 and is a true and accurate record of that decision.

Date: 15th November, 2021

Decision Maker:
The Cabinet

Proper Officer:
Judy Cordell

SCRUTINY

Note: This decision will come in to force at the expiry of 5 working days from the date of publication subject to any review under the Council's Scrutiny "Call-In" provisions.

Call-In Period expires on

Date of Call-in *(if applicable) (this suspends implementation)*

Call-in Procedure completed *(if applicable)*

Call-in heard by *(if applicable)*

Results of Call-in *(if applicable)*