Hampshire Prosperity Partnership Board

Date: Monday 14 September 2026
Time: 14:00 – 16:00
Location: Hampshire County Council, Mitchell Room, Podium Level, EII Court

Present:
Cllr Nick Adams-King – HCC (Chair)
Cllr Phil North – Test Valley BC
Cllr Martin Tod – Winchester CC
Julie Milburn – Sparsholt College Group
Laura Read – Marwell Wildlife
Fiona Stilwell – PETA
Joanna Butler – Butler Farms
Ross McNally – Hampshire Chamber of Commerce
Simon Watson – M Group
Paul West – Marketing Consultant
James Hassett – Solent Freeport
Stephen Martin – HCC

Guests:
Chris Cunningham – HCC

Apologies:
Cllr Zoe Huggins – HCC
Cllr Gareth Williams – Rushmoor BC
Alastair Welch – ABP (Vice Chair)
Nicola Kildunne – FSB
James Knowles – Southampton Solent University

		Action
1.	**Welcome**	
1.1	NAK welcomed the attendees and noted apologies. Christopher Cunningham (CC) was introduced as attending to support the Connect to Work agenda item.	
2.	**Minutes of last meeting**	
2.1	The minutes from 13 July 2026 were agreed.	
3.	**Action points from last meeting**	
3.1	SM provided an update on the Grid Capacity Report. The action is partially complete and remains work in progress. The report has been shared with the Hampshire and the Solent Combined County Authority and the Planning Officers Group.	
4.	**Conflicts of interest**	

4.1	JM noted that Sparsholt College was referenced within the Farming Technology Adoption Project report. It was agreed that this did not constitute a conflict of interest.	
5.	**Devolution and local government reorganisation**	
5.1	NAK provided a verbal update on the Hampshire and the Solent Combined County Authority (HSCCA). The HSCCA Board had been formed, and NAK had been elected Chair at the Board's first meeting. The Government had been asked to bring forward the election of a Mayor to 2027; HSCCA was waiting for a response to this. An early priority for HSCCA would be the development of its Local Growth Plan. SM advised that three members of HCC's Economy and Skills team had been seconded to HSCCA, and that the team was also providing analytical support to HSCCA under a service level agreement. SM also advised that this would be his last HPPB meeting, as he was leaving HCC to take up a role with Bath Spa University. Regarding local government reorganisation (LGR), NAK advised HPPB that the LGR process was on hold pending a review. The Government had not yet clarified the nature and timing of the review.	
6	**Hampshire and the Solent Combined County Authority governance**	
6.1	NAK explained the composition of the HSCCA Board and provided an overview of its planned sub-committees. These would include advisory boards focused on economic growth and regeneration, and on skills and employment support, as well as a Business Advisory Board. The Board discussed the future relationship between HPPB and HSCCA governance structures. NAK expressed the view that HPPB members should be encouraged to apply to be on the HSCCA Business Advisory Board. HPPB agreed that: • Existing arrangements should remain in place for the time being. HPPB and the Hampshire Skills Partnership should continue operating as normal. • The HSCCA Business Advisory Board, HPPB and the Solent Growth Partnership Business Board should work collaboratively, avoiding duplication and establishing clear complementary roles, and ensuring the delivery of tangible outcomes. • Future arrangements may also see HPPB feeding into the HSCCA Business Advisory Board, via HPPB representatives on the Business Advisory Board. **Action: Invite Ruth Adams to attend the next HPPB meeting on 16 November.**	**SM**

7	**Get Hampshire Working Plan and Hampshire Skills Strategy progress report**	
7.1	SM sent Jamie Mackay's apologies and provided an update on his behalf. Progress continues on the implementation of the Get Hampshire Working Plan and Hampshire Skills Strategy, both of which are being delivered through a partnership approach. It was noted that the Department for Work and Pensions expects HSCCA to take responsibility for a single Get Britain Working Plan for Hampshire and the Solent, in due course. The Board also noted that HSCCA is preparing to assume responsibility for Adult Skills Funding. HSCCA is also expected to become a co-owner of the Local Skills Improvement Plan for Hampshire and the Solent, which had been published recently. JM highlighted Sparsholt College's ongoing county-wide skills initiatives focusing on defence, digital, construction and NEETs, working in alignment with existing clusters.	
8	**Connect to Work progress report**	
8.1	SM and CC provided an overview of Hampshire County Council's Connect to Work programme. This included delivery progress, participant demographics and emerging performance trends. CC described the online marketing materials that had been developed to help promote the programme this autumn, and HPPB members agreed to share these within their networks. **Action: CC to circulate an email to HPPB members asking them to support engagement of employers with Connect to Work.**	**CC**
9	**Revenue funding requests**	
9.1	**AI Growth Alliance** Members considered a proposal recommending £37,500 over an 18-month period, to support the further development of the AI Growth Alliance and develop the case for investment in artificial intelligence within Hampshire. Discussion points included governance arrangements and performance management. SM confirmed that a steering group and working groups were already in place, and that funding would be administered through a lead partner in the AI Growth Alliance. **Decision – recommended for approval by HCC.**	
9.2	**Farming Technology Adoption Project** JB raised several questions about the proposed project, including whether technology adoption was the most pressing area of focus, how	

	to ensure equitable access to the support, and the extent to which the proposed project would help to address climate change priorities. HPPB concluded that further consideration and clarification of the proposal was required before a recommendation could be made. **Action: Farming Technology Adoption Project Manager (Chris Burchell) to meet with JB to refine the proposal before returning it to HPPB for reconsideration.**	**CB**
9.3	**Hampshire and Solent Film Office** Proposal to grant £10k of revenue to support the Hampshire and Solent Film Office. The funding would be specifically to enable District and Borough Council's within the County area to access the benefits from the Film Office. Members considered the proposal and agreed that it was aligned with HPPB's strategic objectives. **Decision – recommended for approval by HCC.**	
10	**AOB**	
10.1	None.	