

# Lord Heseltine visits Southend Airport for growth summit



At Southend Airport – Lord Heseltine gives the keynote speech at the summit

•

First published Monday 16 March 2015 in [News](#) by [Philip Jones](#)

FORMER Deputy Prime Minister Lord Heseltine visited [Southend Airport](#) to give the keynote speech at a transport and growth summit.

Lord Heseltine was joined by the leaders of both Southend and [Thurrock](#) Councils, who organised the event, as well as their chief executives and business owners from south Essex.

On the agenda for discussion were the issues of economic growth, connectivity and skills and transport infrastructure.

Lord Heseltine, who described himself as a small businessman, said public and private sectors should work together to ensure funding has a full impact on the private sector.

He said: “This part of the country will be developing significantly over the next few decades. The issue is will it develop centres of excellence?”

“That is not possible without Government involvement.

“If one wants to create something that is demonstrably exciting and excellent, then the chances are central Government funding and decision making will be a part of the process.”

While Lord Heseltine and the other 100 delegates were assembled to discuss future plans for the region, council leaders also took the opportunity to highlight the strengths of the area and what has already been done to promote business growth.

Ron Woodley, leader of Southend Council, said: “Here in south Essex we are blessed with some unique conditions for growth. Our position next to the capital needs to be fully recognised and exploited.

“In the past year, Southend’s Growth Hub has helped around 80 businesses to advance their plans and is helping create more than 300 new jobs.

“Together, our offer to Government is strong – we can deliver growth to make a difference for the national economy.

“It makes sense to back south Essex. Together we can make a great business case for investment.”

John Kent, leader of Thurrock Council, praised his borough’s part in the London markets, thanks to its worldleading ports.

He said: “The attendance here this afternoon of Lord Heseltine simply highlights the importance this area still has to the [Thames Gateway](#) – the proposals he put forward a couple of decades ago.

“I think it is really fitting we are here in the country’s fastest growing airport to look at the way ahead.

“South Essex not only boasts the fastest growing airport, but the fastest growing port – DP World – and London’s premier port – Tilbury.”

## Comments

6:42pm Tue 17 Mar 15

**eurodoomed** says...

I am no fan of Lord Heseltine, who is a Europhile in the style of Ken Clarke, and is something of a troublemaker in the Conservative Party, but his role in the regeneration of Docklands, the development of the Docklands Light Railway, and also the revitalising of Liverpool cannot be denied.

Having said that, he once threatened to hit Michael Foot with the mace in the House of Commons, so may be he is ok after all.

10:41am Tue 17 Mar 15

**maxell** says...

maybe he was down to give his advice on how to run a grown up airport , well the helicopter side of it , thanks for reminding my oven also needs cleaning.

10:43pm Mon 16 Mar 15

**EssexTom** says...

How ironic that Heseltine would visit Southend airport when all he is know for is the affair sorrounding Westland Helicopters

**jayman** says...

Heseltine is as cooked as the carbon layers in my oven. This reminds me that i need to clean it, but I digress. I wonder what his attendance fee was? public/corporate speaking. keeps him in suits and ties. keeps abstract job title types happy and validated.

7:48pm Mon 16 Mar 15

**BMNO6** says...

If this man is involved in anything to do with the regeneration in the SE then god help us, about as trustworthy as Dave comeonin word, fickle man fact. P.S. (remember his dealings Thatcher anyone)