

**NEWS RELEASE** SLB – PR00702 – 30<sup>th</sup> January 2007  
FOR IMMEDIATE PUBLICATION

**South London Business disappointed by Manchester casino announcement**

TODAY: South London Business is disappointed with the announcement by Culture Secretary, Tessa Jowell, that Britain's first super-casino will be built in Manchester. South London Business Chief Executive, Peter Pledger, said "Today's decision by the Casino Advisory Panel is disappointing. The economic benefits for London would have been enormous; the super-casino would have further strengthened London's already impressive tourist offer; helped stimulate business-led regeneration; and provided significant employment opportunities. I congratulate Manchester's bid team, however, this decision is a blow for London".

Mr Pledger added "The decision to grant a license for the O2 Dome would have brought significant benefits to the local economy around Greenwich. Our Thames Gateway City Growth team have been working on the development of a business-led regeneration strategy for Greenwich and Lewisham for a number of years and the new casino would, without a doubt, have stimulated the local economy. Furthermore, the economic stimulus from the new casino would have benefited the wider London economy – with employment and supply-chain opportunities for residents and businesses across South London".

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(180 words)

**Notes to Editors:**

For further information, or to arrange an interview with Peter Pledger, please contact: Ross Feeney, Policy & Communications Manager - 020 8256 1281

**South London Business (SLB)** is a business organisation that exists to represent and promote the South London economy. SLB provides strategic political support to companies by bridging the gap between the public and private sectors. South London Business:

- Can facilitate access to senior public figures and policy makers, including key figures within the 'Mayoral Family' and local and regional politicians.
- Co-ordinates an employer-led Skills Alliance for South London; working to influence the skills agenda to ensure school-leavers and graduates have the skills required by business.
- Supports and promotes sub-regional initiatives in the innovation and tourism sectors, and promotes business-led regeneration through two 'City Growth' projects.
- Lobbies on strategic issues such as:
  - Transport network improvements
  - Safeguarding commercial land from residential redevelopment, and
  - Solutions to issues such as planning, skills and 'crime and grime'.
- Provides access to markets, new contacts and new business opportunities

South London Business also supports smaller companies through 'Work Smarter' – which seeks to encourage greater investment in staff training and development.