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ENERGY FIRM PLEDGES NEW JOBS AS HEDGE END STREET LIGHTING SITE POWERS UP

SSE (Scottish and Southern Energy) is creating 50 new jobs and investing in a new Hedge End regional depot, as this week it officially takes over a £225 million, 25-year street lighting contract for three South Coast Councils.

The South Coast Street Lighting Private Finance Initiative (PFI), the largest PFI of its kind in the UK, manages lighting services for Hampshire County Council, Southampton City Council and West Sussex County Council. Under the contract, SSE Contracting will replace and maintain 250,000 streetlights, illuminated signs and bollards.

To support the new contract, SSE has signed a 25-year lease on a new, 60,000 sq ft regional depot at Flanders Road in Hedge End. Around 150 staff will be based there, including existing street lighting and administration staff from SSE and the councils, as well as 50 new roles. Thirty five of these are currently being recruited and the company expects to take on a further 15 before the end of the year. The new, skilled positions will include electricians, admin and store staff.

Mark Mathieson, Director of Distribution for SSE, said "Our team are really looking forward to working on this contract and delivering better lit streets to help communities lead safer and more secure lives. We've spent months putting our plans and preparations into place for the project. SSE has strong roots in the south and our investment in our new Hedge End regional depot reinforces that."

This new PFI takes the number of local authorities with which SSE has long-term PFI street lighting replacement and maintenance contracts to 10. SSE now looks after over 1 million street lights across the UK, half of which are covered by PFIs.