



Item 9

Report to the Partnership for Urban South Hampshire Scrutiny and Overview Committee

Date: **3 November 2009**

Report of: **Julian Lomas, PUSH Interim Managing Director**

Subject: **Multi Area Agreement (MAA) Stocktake**

SUMMARY

This report is to present to members the findings of the recently completed stocktake of the South Hampshire Agreement (the MAA) for which PUSH has been a national pathfinder.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee RECEIVES and COMMENTS on the MAA stocktake report and its key messages.

INTRODUCTION

1. At previous meetings in May and July the PUSH Joint Committee resolved to participate as a 'national pathfinder' to develop an MAA Stocktake methodology and best practice in partnership with CLG and to initiate discussion with Government on updating the MAA to reflect changed circumstances since it was signed in July 2008 and to include a limited number of new outcomes as follows:
 - Green infrastructure and the natural environment: to develop a Memorandum of understanding with the Environment Agency and Natural England;
 - Economic development: to develop a joint investment planning with SEEDA, LSC/SFA and Job Centre Plus;
 - Public Transport: to develop a broad MoU with Network Rail, bus operators and DfT to deliver common objectives and shared priorities on public transport in South Hampshire;
 - HCA Single Conversation: to develop a joint investment planning with the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA); and
 - External funding/better use of assets: to develop new, potentially significant, way of securing resources at a sub-regional level.

MAA STOCKTAKE REPORT

2. The full report on the findings of the stocktake for the South Hampshire Agreement is attached at Appendix A. The report was prepared following a questionnaire survey of regional and sub-regional partners, a survey of Government departments and a review of performance data and progress reporting on MAA enabling measures.
3. Overall the findings of the report are encouraging: there is a consensus that the MAA is having a positive impact on partnership working and, through that, on outcomes although there are, as would be expected after such a short period since the agreement was signed, area for further work and improvement.
4. In summary the strengths identified in the report area:-
 - a) The strength of relationships between partners in South Hampshire;
 - b) PUSH has a sound strategy and has aligned priorities well with its partners;
 - c) Securing additional resources from Government;
 - d) Responsiveness to the impacts of the recession with performance indicators appearing to show that South Hampshire, while still being severely affected, has been more resilient than many other areas; and
 - e) Performance against targets other than those rendered unrealistic by the impacts of the recession;

5. Areas for improvement identified in the report are:-
 - a) A clear need for better alignment between partners of spending and investment;
 - b) The need to ensure the emphasis continues to shift to delivery rather than planning; and
 - c) Further devolution of responsibilities/power from central government is required and the need for better engagement of some Government departments.
6. Progress on agreeing enabling measures identified in the MAA has been patchy with some examples of rapid and positive progress and others where progress has been disappointing (for a variety of reasons including changing circumstances).
7. These findings provide a useful basis for discussion on the MAA refresh, in particular strengthening the PUSH case for robust joint investment frameworks with HCA, SEEDA, LSC/SFA and Job Centre Plus and the need for shared priorities with environmental agencies. The findings also give a clear message to Government departments that greater engagement and devolution by them is required and to PUSH to ensure that discussions on refreshing the MAA are delivery and outcome focused.
8. Discussions on the MAA refresh are now well underway with significant progress in some area and more limited progress in others The timescale for agreeing the refreshed MAA (new outcomes to include and updating existing outcomes) appears now to be more relaxed. In some ways this is helpful in allowing more time to secure more specific enabling measures although PUSH should avoid letting the discussion go on too much beyond Christmas.

RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee RECEIVES and CONSIDERS the MAA stocktake report and its key messages.

Background Papers: None

Enquiries:

For further information on this report please contact Julian Lomas (Interim PUSH Managing Director)

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