



Item 8

Report to the Partnership for Urban South Hampshire Joint Committee

Date: **15 September 2009**
Report of: **Stuart Jarvis, PUSH Managing Director**
Subject: **Managing Director's Report**

SUMMARY

This report represents an additional method for PUSH business to be reported to the Joint Committee. The Managing Director's report provides an opportunity for issues which are significant, but do not justify a full report in their own right, to be brought to the attention of the Joint Committee for a decision or for information. The report is divided into Parts A and B accordingly.

Part A: MATTERS FOR A DECISION

SEEDA Contract

1. PUSH receives funding from SEEDA to support its economic development activities. In 2008, SEEDA indicated that it would provide an annual sum of £165,000 for 3 years. In September 2008, the Joint Committee authorised Hampshire County Council, as lead authority, to sign an agreement with SEEDA to receive this funding in return for specific commitments towards the delivery of the sub regional partnership. PUSH has now received an amendment to the contract from SEEDA relating to the delivery milestones in 2009-10. The terms and conditions of the contract signed in 2008 remain in force and unaltered. It is recommended that this amended agreement should be signed. Therefore the Joint Committee is asked to authorise Hampshire County Council to sign the amended schedule on behalf of PUSH.
2. The Joint Committee is therefore **RECOMMENDED** to **AUTHORISE** Hampshire County Council to sign the Amended Schedule to the contract with SEEDA on behalf of PUSH.

Government Consultation Documents: 'Policy Statement on Regional Strategies and Guidance on the establishment of Leaders' Boards'

1. The Government is consulting on a draft Policy Statement on Regional Strategies and on draft Guidance on the establishment of Leaders' Boards. Comments have been invited by 30 October 2009. The documents amplify and build on the provisions in the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Bill currently progressing through Parliament. They set out proposals on the purpose, scope and context of Regional Strategies, the circumstances in which sub-regions should be identified, and the processes for Regional Strategy preparation. They also set out the proposed national guidance on how each region should establish its Leaders Board, including the Board's size, representativeness, and decision making. In fact these arrangements for the South East have already been put in place by the local authorities.
2. The documents contain few surprises as they echo the proposals set out in the Sub-National Review (SNR) back in 2007. One welcome change is the emphasis placed on economic growth being 'sustainable' and a recognition - indeed a requirement - that regional authorities must consider environmental limits to development/growth in preparing their strategy. This is a softer emphasis than the pre-eminence which the SNR sought to give to economic growth. The current document in contrast, consistently uses the term "*sustainable economic growth*".
3. The Regional Strategy preparation process will largely replicate that of the erstwhile Regional Spatial Strategies, with two significant differences:-
 - Firstly, the Examination-in-Public panel will be appointed much earlier in the process and will have a role in commenting on the evidence base which underpins the options being considered.
 - Secondly, the regional authorities will receive and consider the EiP Panel's report, then revise the strategy before submission to the Secretary of State. Under the current arrangements, the Secretary of State receives and actions the Panel's report.
4. The documents set out the factors to be considered in identifying sub-regions: these are city regions, growth areas, MAAs, housing markets, travel to work areas etc. PUSH will welcome this as it provides a basis for the new South East England Regional Strategy to continue to recognise South Hampshire as a sub-region.
5. The Joint Committee is therefore **RECOMMENDED** to **AUTHORISE** the Managing Director, in consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairmen, to submit a PUSH response to the consultations based on the views set out in this report.

Strengthening Local Democracy: Government Consultation

1. The Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government wrote to all Local Authority Chief Executives on 22nd July launching a consultation on 'local democratic renewal'. Whilst the consultation document covers a number of areas, and individual authorities are responding directly, it is proposed that PUSH should respond on the specific issue of sub-regional arrangements.

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2. The deadline for comments is 2nd October, and therefore it is proposed that a draft response be prepared by the PUSH Managing Director in consultation with PUSH Chief Executives, with the final response signed off by the PUSH Chairman and Vice Chairmen.
3. It is therefore **RECOMMENDED** that the Joint Committee **AUTHORISES** the Managing Director, in consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairmen, to submit a PUSH response to this consultation in respect of the sub-regional issues.

UK City of Culture 2013

1. In July 2009 the Department for Culture Media and Sport (DCMS) opened a bidding process for cities interested in becoming UK city of culture 2013. The definition of city is very flexible and collaborations of Local Authorities across urban areas such as city regions or areas with a clear identity to visitors have been encouraged. In 2002 Inverness and the Highlands made an application to be European City of Culture.
2. The bidding process builds on the successful process used to select Liverpool as the European Capital of Culture 2007, which also led to the establishment of the Cities Cultural Network of bidding authorities which have used culture as a catalyst for change.
3. The Government is seeking bids that:
 - Are distinctive – building on what the area has to offer and its existing assets;
 - Are ambitious and Stretching – leading to a step change in the area;
 - Demonstrate cultural and artistic excellence;
 - Include and work with broad partnerships;
 - Reach out to a wide range of participants – especially currently under represented groups;
 - Will lead to a lasting change in the area; and
 - Are realistic and deliverable.
4. Bidders are required to submit outline proposals by 15 October , and initial bids by 11 December. Full and final bids are required by 28 May 2010 and it is anticipated the result will be announced summer 2010
5. Portsmouth City Council and Southampton City Council are working together to develop an initial bid for the South Hampshire and will be seeking to engage PUSH partner Authorities in this process.
6. It is Recommended that the Joint Committee **SUPPORTS** the initiative to make an initial bid, and to support further development of the bid in partnership with the two cities through the work with of the Quality Place delivery panel

PART B: MATTERS FOR INFORMATION

PUSH Web-Site

1. I am delighted to advise Members that work is now nearing completion on the new PUSH web-site, and that the switch over to the new site is planned to take place in mid September. The new site will provide significant increased functionality, as well as improved layout and content and greater ease of navigation for users. The dates will be confirmed shortly, and members and partners will be notified of the details at this time.

External Funding: Leaders and Chief Executives Workshop

1. PUSH has run a series of occasional workshops for Leaders and Chief Executives in respect of emerging work areas, to raise awareness and encourage discussion and early engagement with emerging issues. Following on from a previous event on the initial thinking on external funding challenges, which led to the establishment of the External Funding Theme and Delivery Panel, it is now proposed to organise a further event on external funding. This workshop will be an opportunity for sharing the background work done to date by the External Funding Theme, covering areas such as potential funding sources, options for innovative delivery arrangements and the importance of investment planning. The workshop is also intended to provide an initial forum for discussion of the implications of the recession and the public funding outlook on current PUSH investment priorities and thinking, and to look in more detail at deliverability and realism within current plans, which can in turn inform the work on the Business Plan refresh, and the proposed Investment Strategy for South Hampshire. It is considered that there is a unique opportunity for PUSH to work up ideas around funding and delivery as a proposition to put to an incoming Government in 2010, and the proposed workshop is intended to raise awareness of key themes and options to be worked through for further consideration. It is hoped to propose date options for late October at the Joint Committee meeting.

Background Papers: - None

For further information on this report please contact:- Stuart Jarvis, PUSH Managing Director (stuart.jarvis@push.gov.uk)