



Report to the Partnership for Urban South Hampshire Joint Committee

Date: **24 November 2009**

Report of: **Jon Pittam, Treasurer and Julian Lomas, Interim Managing Director**

Subject: **PUSH Finance Protocols**

SUMMARY

At the meeting in November 2008 the Joint Committee formally approved the Governance arrangements for PUSH, including the Finance Protocol, setting out the arrangements for conducting PUSH financial affairs. A number of revisions to the Finance Protocol have been made, both in the light of experience gained since the adoption of the Protocol by the Joint Committee, and also to incorporate recommendations made by District Audit in their review of the value for money arrangements

RECOMMENDATION

This Committee is recommended to:-

- (a) APPROVE the revised PUSH Finance Protocol, as attached as [Appendix 1](#).
- (b) NOTE that the Chief Financial Officer has authority to make any further minor revisions to this Protocol as necessary.

INTRODUCTION

1. The Finance Protocol, governing the conduct of PUSH financial affairs, was approved by the Joint Committee in November 2008, as part of the general governance arrangements. Over the last 12 months, and in light of experience gained, it has become clear that a number of minor changes are necessary to clarify the responsibilities of partners and their staff, and to make financial matters more efficient and effective.
2. In addition, District Audit, as part of their examination of the PUSH Statement of Accounts 2008-09, made a number of recommendations in connection with PUSH responsibilities to ensure the achievement of Value for Money. The recommended changes are also included in this latest revision.
3. Under the Joint Agreement, and Governance arrangements previously approved by the Joint Committee, the Chief Financial Officer has authority to make further minor changes to this Protocol without having to seek Joint Committee approval. Any such changes will be reported to the Joint Committee for information. Significant revisions will be presented to the Joint Committee for approval.

REVISIONS

4. The majority of changes made are to clarify the responsibility of PUSH officers and lead Chief Executives in the areas of procurement and payment, and to streamline and make more effective the process of project appraisal and approval. The forms that are used in these processes have been improved and updated in line with the changes.
5. The financial reporting responsibilities have also been revised and restated, and now include the roles of new posts established within the PUSH management team structure.
6. On the recommendation of District Audit, paragraphs have been included on the prevention of fraud, and to introduce a Project Completion Form to allow PUSH to assess the performance of projects and to ensure that objectives have been achieved.

LEGAL LIABILITIES

7. Paragraphs 27 and 28 in the latest revision of the protocol are intended to cover the signing of contracts on behalf of PUSH and the potential liabilities of partners arising from any such contracts. The exact wording of the paragraphs are currently under discussion with legal representatives of Hampshire County Council and PUSH Legal Advisor, and will be the subject of a separate report to the PUSH Joint Committee at the same time as the revised version of the PUSH Business Plan, probably in the final quarter of 2009-10. The final wording of the paragraphs will be amended in line with that report.

CONCLUSION

8. This Committee is recommended to:

- (a) APPROVE the revised PUSH Finance Protocol, as attached as Appendix 1.
- (b) NOTE that the Chief Financial Officer has authority to make any further minor revisions to this Protocol as necessary.

Background Papers: -

Enquiries:

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