



Report to the Partnership for Urban South Hampshire Joint Committee

Date: **12 June 2008**

Report of: **Richard Longman, PUSH Project Director**

Subject: **South Hampshire Multi Area Agreement**

SUMMARY

The March meeting of this Committee approved the outline of the proposed Multi Area Agreement (MAA) for South Hampshire, and mandated the Chairman of the PUSH Working Group, in consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairmen of this Committee, to negotiate the MAA on the basis of the PUSH Business Plan.

This report provides an update on progress and outlines the remaining stages in the process to conclusion of the MAA. The latest draft is attached as an Appendix.

RECOMMENDATION

The Joint Committee is asked to:

- (1) ENDORSE the emerging draft MAA as consistent with the PUSH Business Plan;
- (2) DELEGATE authority to the Chairman of the PUSH Working Group, in consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairmen of this Committee, to finalise the negotiated text of the MAA; and
- (3) NOTE the process for finalising and signing off the MAA.

INTRODUCTION

1. The report [[pjc-080318-r07-rlo](#)] to the 18th March Joint Committee meeting explained the background to the MAA. This is an important piece in the jigsaw for securing the delivery of the South Hampshire Sub-Regional Strategy. Its value, aside from any enabling measures that might be granted, is that it will anchor the commitment of central Government and its agencies to work with PUSH and its partners in the delivery of the outcomes set out in the MAA, which derive from the PUSH Business Plan.
2. The main focus of the MAA is economic development and enterprise, together with those elements of housing, strategic planning and transport that will support PUSH's overall strategic objectives around economic-led growth. The MAA is therefore based primarily on the PUSH Business Plan.
3. The MAA is not solely about PUSH. Just as delivery of the Sub-Regional Strategy for South Hampshire depends on the contribution of a range of partners, so too does the MAA. Preparation of the draft has therefore involved close and detailed working in particular with Job Centre Plus, the Learning and Skills Council, Business Link, SEEDA and Transport for South Hampshire. These partners have made substantial contributions to this document. The MAA has therefore been called the South Hampshire Agreement to reflect the broad partnership with interests in its outcomes and delivery.

PROCESS AND TIMETABLE

4. Preparation of the MAA has also been an iterative process involving consultations with the Government Office for the South East (GOSE) and Whitehall Departments, coordinated by DCLG, to refine and test the proposed outcomes and enabling measures covered by the Agreement. This has included an informal 'round table' with Whitehall officials on 15th May. At the time of writing we are anticipating a formal 'round table' meeting with the relevant Director Generals of Government Departments to be held on 11 June. The draft serving as the basis of that negotiation meeting is attached at Appendix 2.
5. Depending on the outcome of that formal meeting (which will be known by and reported verbally to the Joint Committee on 12th June), any necessary adjustments will be made with a view to submitting the final draft Agreement to DCLG by around 18th June (subject to advice from DCLG).
6. The South Hampshire Agreement, together with all other MAA submissions, will be considered by HMG at a Cabinet meeting towards the end of June. We expect an announcement about the outcome and next steps at the end of the month or early July. The arrangements for signing off the final Agreement by PUSH and its partners will be notified during this period.
7. Because the Agreement reflects the commitment of all the local authorities in PUSH, as well as other partners, we are recommending that the Agreement should be signed by all of the Leaders and by senior representatives of our partners. It is our understanding that the Agreement itself is not a legally-binding instrument; but it would carry significant authority if endorsed in this manner. Advice is awaited from DCLG as to what the sign-off arrangements will be for Government Departments, assuming the Agreement is made.

ISSUES & IMPLICATIONS

Outcomes and enabling measures

8. The outcomes and enabling measures in the draft Agreement have been refined significantly since the outline presented to the last Joint Committee. The MAA is structured broadly to reflect the chapter structure of the PUSH Business Plan. Thus, each thematic section summarises the high level outcomes set out in the corresponding chapter of the Business Plan, and then focuses on the particular highlighted outcomes that are to be covered by the MAA. For most, but not all, of the outcomes there are then one or more enabling measures proposed which, if granted, would add to the benefits the MAA should help deliver.
9. The draft Agreement covers eight outcomes and ten enabling measures. These are summarised at Appendix 1. The first outcome and enabling measure addresses the fundamental issue of the relationship we expect the MAA to foster between PUSH and its partners and central and regional arms of Government. Key proposals in the remaining outcomes and enabling measures include:

Economic Development

- Support for accelerating the creation of an executive Employment and Skills Board, initially in shadow form, to lead initiatives in South Hampshire to tackle economic inactivity and improve skills that reflect the needs of employers. It is proposed to pilot some initiatives joined up with actions to improve some of our worst estates, where concentrations of unemployment and lower skills coincide with areas of predominantly local authority-owned housing;
- Changes to the flexibilities available under the Train to Gain and apprenticeships programmes, to enable more tailored and enhanced support to help people achieve level 2 and level 3 qualifications;
- Changes to the targeting framework for Business Support, to enable more intensive engagement with businesses to improve their performance and productivity;

Transport Infrastructure

- Closer working with the Highways Agency to achieve a balanced approach to supporting sub-regional growth objectives and national transport objectives, including a joint pilot scheme for active traffic management on the M3 and M27;

Housing and local planning

- Closer collaboration with the Housing Corporation and English Partnerships to support estate regeneration schemes.

10. On some outcomes and enabling measures we have already concluded that proposals are not sufficiently advanced for inclusion in this iteration of the MAA. To give one example, we might want to explore the merits of a business rate supplement (BRS) as a mechanism to support infrastructure investment, which

might be much facilitated by allowing it to be delivered at MAA level. We intend to do further work on these with a view to possible inclusion in a further iteration or supplement to the MAA in the Autumn. This approach has been encouraged by DCLG and would tie in with the timetable for a number of other 'first wave' partnerships making their MAA submissions. So if the negotiations with Whitehall conclude that some of the present proposals need further work, their omission from the MAA this time round is not necessarily the end of the story.

Relationship with Local Area Agreements (LAAs)

11. The MAA process has coincided with the 'refresh' of the three LAAs (Hampshire, Portsmouth and Southampton). The three LAA lead officers have been part of the core team involved in the development of the MAA, to ensure that the MAA is complementary to the LAAs. Where the MAA outcomes correspond with priorities in the LAAs, we have aimed to demonstrate how the MAA adds value (this is summarised in section 12 of the draft MAA).

CONCLUSION

The Joint Committee is asked to:

- (1) ENDORSE the emerging draft MAA as consistent with the PUSH Business Plan;
- (2) AUTHORISE the Chairman of the PUSH Working Group, in consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairmen of this Committee, to finalise the negotiated text of the MAA; and
- (3) NOTE the process for finalising and signing off the MAA.

Approved by the Monitoring Officer		Date:	
Approved by the Finance Officer		Date:	

Background Papers:

Report to PUSH Joint Committee [[pic-080318-r07-rlo](#)], 18th March 2008
 PUSH Business Plan [[pic-080318-r08-rlo](#)] – report with Appendix to Joint Committee, 18th March 2008

Reference Papers:

[Appendix 1: Summary of Outcomes and Enabling Measures](#)
[Appendix 2: Draft South Hampshire Agreement \(version 5.5\)](#)

Enquiries:

For further information on this report please contact:-

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