



Report to the Partnership for Urban South Hampshire Joint Committee

Date: 14 September 2010

Report of: Anne-Marie Mountifield, PUSH Executive Director

Subject: Executive Director's Report

SUMMARY

This report represents an additional method for PUSH business to be reported to the Joint Committee. The Executive 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.

RECOMMENDATION

It is RECOMMENDED that the Joint Committee:-

1. AUTHORISES the Executive Director, following consultation with the Chairman of the Joint Committee and the Chairman of the ED Panel, to finalise a response on the draft Economic Assessment for Hampshire for submission by 15 October 2010;
2. AUTHORISES the Executive Director, following consultation with the Chairman of the Joint Committee and the Chairman of the EMPLOYMENT AND Skills Board (ESB), to finalise a response for the BIS consultation on *Skills for sustainable growth : A consultation on the future direction of skills policy*, for submission by 14 October 2010, at the latest; and
3. NOTES the matters for information contained in Part B of this report.

Part A: MATTERS FOR A DECISION

Economic Assessment for Hampshire

1. Hampshire County Council has produced a draft Local Economic Assessment (LEA) as required under the Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 2009. The duty to assess the economic circumstances of an area came into effect on 1 April 2010 and the first Assessment should be completed by March 2011.

The aim of LEAs is to equip local authorities and partners with a common understanding of the local economic conditions, economic geography and the economic, social and environmental factors that impact on economic growth. This assessment should provide an evidence base to inform a range of local strategies, policies and interventions.

2. Hampshire is now formally inviting views on the draft Assessment for Hampshire. The draft Assessment and the questionnaire that accompanies it have been published and can be accessed at: <http://www3.hants.gov.uk/business/economicassessment> and PUSH is required to submit a response no later than **Friday, 15 October 2010**, the end of the consultation period.

Once the consultation has concluded, a revised document will then be prepared, taking account of the comments received, as well as any new information which becomes available over the summer. That document will be presented to County Councillors for approval in early 2011. It is therefore important that PUSH considers the assessment and ensures that it accurately reflects the outcome of the work undertaken on the Economic Development strategy to date. The intention is to draft a response for consideration by the Economic Development Delivery Panel, but it is recognised that the deadline for submission comes before the next Joint Committee on 9 November 2010.

3. It is therefore RECOMMENDED that once the response has been considered by the Economic Development Delivery panel, the Joint Committee AUTHORISES the Executive Director following consultation with the Chairman of the Joint Committee and the Chairman of the Economic Development Delivery Panel, to finalise the response for submission by 15 October 2010.

Skills for sustainable growth: A consultation on the future direction of skills policy

4. The Department for Business Innovation and Skills (BIS) published on 22 July 2010, a consultation outlining their emerging vision for skills and explores some key areas where they would like to seek further views. They intend to publish a full strategy for skills after the Spending Review in October which will set out in more detail how they intend to support learning and skills priorities. This accompanies the BIS paper entitled; *A Strategy for Sustainable Growth*, which sets out how they will create the conditions for sustainable growth and was published at about the same time. Both documents can be accessed via the BIS website at <http://www.bis.gov.uk/Consultations/skills-for-sustainable-growth-consultation>. It should be noted that the skills system in South Hampshire has increasingly focused on the needs of the sub-regional economy and critically the

skills of the resident workforce, with take up of vocational training at a significantly higher level than any other growth area in the South East. This reflects the work of the Employment and Skills Board, which has sought to secure a well co-ordinated, multi-organisational approach to skills. Under their current remit, the ESB carries out a key role in developing and delivering employability and skills aspects of the "South Hampshire Agreement and therefore they will consider this consultation and agree a draft response at the forthcoming meeting on 16 September 2010

5. The consultation starts the debate about the choices that may need to be made in the forthcoming Spending Review round and this provides a challenging context for reform of the skills system. The consultation also presents options to focus public investment and invites views on the direction set out. On this basis the consultation is seeking feedback on where PUSH thinks public investment is most valuable, how the skills system can be made simpler and more effective, and on ideas on how PUSH can better support employers and individuals to invest in learning and develop the skills that the economy needs. A copy of the consultation questionnaire is attached in Appendix A.
6. It should be noted that, although BIS are running a full 12 week consultation period, closing on 14 October 2010, they have advised that they are already discussing the right areas for investment through the Spending Review and comments received earlier are more likely to influence this process.
7. It is therefore RECOMMENDED that once the response has been considered and agreed by the ESB, the Joint Committee AUTHORISES the Executive Director, following consultation with the Chairman of the Joint Committee and the Chairman of the ESB, to finalise the response for submission by 14 October 2010 at the latest.

Part B: MATTERS FOR INFORMATION

Growth Fund Capital Allocation for 2010/11

8. At the Joint Committee in June 2010, it was reported that a letter had been received from the Chief Executive of the Housing and Communities Agency, advising that Capital Fund allocations could not be confirmed until after the Budget on 22 June 2010. At the subsequent Joint Committee on 7 July 2010, the Chairman advised that the letter from Grant Shapps, Housing Minister, dated 2 July 2010, which was sent to the Leaders of growth area and growth point lead local authorities and partnerships, confirmed that 2010/11 funding had been safeguarded. However, before funding was released, the Minister wanted to hear from each growth location partnership on how the new approach of the Coalition Government could be reflected in their vision for the area. A response was submitted on 29 July 2010 (see Appendix B), and on 23 August 2010 we received confirmation from the HCA that they had received the Grant Determination from Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) and approval to make payment of the 2010/11 allocation to PUSH. Capital funds of £5.336m were received on 27 August 2010

Core team staffing

9. Since the last meeting on 7 July 2010, I can advise that the internship for Guy Campbell has concluded. During his period with PUSH, Guy supported the

further work on the PUSH website and provided supporting analysis work for the Economic Development Strategy consultation that commenced on 21 July 2010.

10. Following agreement at the Joint Committee meeting on 23 June 2010 the process of appointing a Green Infrastructure Co-ordinator was initiated and has concluded. Mr. Phil Lomax has been appointed on a 12 month contract to undertake this role and he is anticipated to start on 6 September 2010. Phil has excellent experience in the delivery and management of green infrastructure. Recently he has been managing his own environmental consultancy business but prior that he was Head of Countryside and Recreation at Eastleigh Borough Council. He is a qualified ecologist and will bring significant expertise to this role. His immediate priorities will include establishing a Green Infrastructure Implementation Group from the PUSH local authorities and key partner organisations and developing an implementation programme based on the key projects identified in the approved Green Infrastructure Strategy.
11. One of the projects that will feature early in the programme is to work closely with the Hampshire Wildlife Trust on the "Access to Nature" project which was supported by the Sustainability and Community Infrastructure Delivery Panel contributing £60,000 of match funding to support a bid to Natural England. This bid has now been successful and the project has been awarded £370,000 of Big Lottery funding which together with PUSH and other contributions will provide a total pot of nearly £500,000. This project will be known as "PUSHing Down the Barriers" and will be focussed in South Hampshire. It will involve undertaking environmental enhancements and nature conservation work using (NEETS) young people who are finding difficulties in accessing the job market. Participation in the project will improve their skills for future employment.

Local Enterprise Partnerships

12. At the meeting on 7 July 2010 the Chairman referred to the recent letter from the two Secretaries of State on Local Enterprise Partnerships, which members have seen. CLG had advised that it would be helpful if consultation responses could be received by the end of July, if possible, or by the end of August. As agreed, an initial expression of interest was developed, in line with the requirements in the letter from the two Secretaries of State and submitted on 5 August 2010 (see Appendix C). An update was submitted on 6 September 2010.

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2. AUTHORISES the Executive Director following, consultation with the Chairman of the Joint Committee and the Chairman of the ESB, to finalise a response for the BIS consultation on *Skills for sustainable growth : A consultation on the*

future direction of skills policy, for submission by 14 October 2010 at the latest; and

3. NOTES the matters for information contained in Part B of this report.

Appendices:

- A - [consultation questionnaire](#)
- B - [Response on how the new approach of the Coalition Government can be reflected in vision for the area](#)
- C - [Initial expression of interest](#)

Enquiries:

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