



# Minutes of the Partnership for Urban South Hampshire (PUSH) Overview and Scrutiny Committee

*Minutes of a meeting held on 3 November 2009  
in the Council Chamber, Civic Offices, Fareham*

<b>Councillors</b>		<b>Authority represented:</b>
Mrs Dorothy Denston (deputising for Mrs Marjorie Harvey)		East Hampshire DC
David Goodall		Eastleigh BC
Leslie Keeble		Fareham BC
Bob Forder		Gosport BC
Gwen Blackett		Havant BC
David Russell (deputising for Paul Vickers)		New Forest DC
Mike Park		Portsmouth CC
Jill Baston		Southampton CC
Ian Hibberd		Test Valley BC
Roger Huxstep		Winchester CC
<b>Also Present:-</b>		
Brad Roynon		Chief Executive, Southampton CC
Julian Lomas		PUSH Interim Managing Director
Gloria Ighodaro		PUSH Programme & Information Manager

**1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

RESOLVED that Councillor Jill Baston be appointed Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the remainder of the municipal year 2009/10.

**2. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN**

RESOLVED that Councillor David Goodall be appointed as Vice-Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the remainder of the municipal year 2008/09.

**3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND CHANGES IN OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MEMBERSHIP**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs Marjorie Harvey of East Hampshire District Council and Paul Vickers of New Forest District Council.

An apology for absence was also received from Mr Peter Grimwood, Chief Executive of Fareham Borough Council.

**4. MINUTES**

RESOLVED, that the minutes of the meeting of the PUSH Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 7 May 2009 be confirmed and signed as a correct record (attached - [pos-090507-m](#)).

**5. PUSH MANAGING DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

The Committee received a report from the PUSH Interim Managing Director, which advised that since the last meeting, a number of significant developments had taken place within PUSH. The report set out a brief summary of these key developments, including a brief overview of progress in the second half of the year up to 31 March 2009 (copy of report [pos-091103-r01-jlo](#) circulated with agenda and appended to signed minutes). The report also provided a brief summary of the key developments not covered elsewhere on the agenda.

The Chairman welcomed Julian Lomas as the PUSH Interim Managing Director.

Growth Fund Allocations:

The PUSH Interim Managing Director explained that Just before the summer break, the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) had announced that to fund the Government's pledge to put more money into house building programmes during the recession, they would cut the capital allocation for the Growth Fund (PUSH's only current source of capital funding) by £128m). The Government's preferred option was for a pro-rata cut across all Growth Points, which would mean a cut of over £4m – this would require PUSH to cut funding to projects that were already underway.

It would also mean that PUSH would be unlikely to have funds to invest in the two projects previously identified by the Joint Committee as high priorities for funding, namely: the access to Tipner Project and M27 Junction 5 Improvement, Phase Three.

The DCLG was currently consulting on options for apportioning the cut across Growth Points, still indicating a strong preference for a pro-rata cut. PUSH would make a robust response that the cut was a breach of faith on the part of the Government, which it should not carry through, but that if the cut was made, then areas with an MAA should be protected.

In respect of the M27 Junction 5 Phase Three Project, a member asked if a presentation could be made at the next meeting of the Committee regarding the escalating costs of the proposed access road to the Eastleigh Riverside Development Area, of which this project formed part. The PUSH Interim Managing Director undertook to ask Hampshire County Council to answer the query at the next meeting.

PUSH Business Plan:

The Committee was advised that the Business Plan would be revised once the new economic Development Strategy was drafted next year.

Core Team Staffing:

The PUSH Interim Managing Director introduced Gloria Ighodaro, the PUSH Programme and Information Manager. Gloria would be presenting a report later on the agenda.

He also explained that the team was now fully staffed, apart from the Project Director's post, which was currently being advertised.

Conclusion:

The Committee was advised that it had been another busy period for PUSH, particularly in responding to the rapidly changing economic environment and focusing on delivery of key projects. PUSH now had an enhanced capacity to make a greater impact and enhance the sub-region's standing in Government and with other partners. Nonetheless, there were significant challenges ahead, in particular with the refresh of the economic development evidence base and strategy and of the MAA (which would be considered elsewhere on the agenda).

It was AGREED that the Interim Managing Director's report be NOTED.

**6. MULTI AREA AGREEMENT (MAA) STOCKTAKE**

The Committee considered a report, by the PUSH Interim Managing Director, which presented the findings of the recently completed stocktake of the South Hampshire Agreement (the MAA) for which PUSH has been a national pathfinder (copy of report [pos-091103-r02-jlo](#) circulated with agenda and appended to signed minutes).

The Committee was advised that Appendix A set out the findings of the stocktake for the South Hampshire Agreement including a number of positive conclusions in respect of partnership working, responding to the impacts of the recession and securing additional funding. Areas for improvement identified in the report were:-

- (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.

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 the DCLG and to initiate discussion with the Government on updating the MAA to reflect changing 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, ways of securing resources at a sub-regional level.

It was AGREED that the report and its key messages be NOTED.

## **7. PUSH PERFORMANCE REPORT**

The Committee considered a report by the PUSH Managing Director and the PUSH Programme and Information Manager, which provided a summary of PUSH's performance for 2008/2009 against the previously agreed key strategic outcomes using an exception based approach as the basis for performance management (copy of report [pos-091103-r03-jlo-qig](#) circulated with agenda and appended to signed minutes).

A member asked if the figures for Gosport employment rates were correct, as they appeared to be higher than other PUSH areas. Given the high variations in performance between areas of prosperity and deprivation within South Hampshire, it was felt that some of the indicators (many of which are sub-region-wide averages), could be misleading. The PUSH Interim Managing Director pointed out that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Joint Committee had previously asked for the number of indicators to be reduced and therefore, while more detailed analysis of the data at local level is undertaken it is, in many cases, only presented in the performance report in the commentary rather than statistically. He also undertook to check the figures with Job Centre Plus and report back to the member concerned.

It was AGREED, that the latest performance information for the measures previously adopted by the Joint Committee be NOTED.

## **8. PUSH IMPROVEMENT PLAN**

The Committee considered a report by the PUSH Interim Managing Director and the Treasurer, which set out the proposed Improvement Plan to achieve the objectives, set by the District Auditor report on the PUSH Statement of Accounts 2008/09, which included conclusions on how effective PUSH had been in achieving Value For Money. The report also set out a number of recommendations for improving performance (copy of report [pos-091103-r04-ilo-jpi](#) circulated with agenda and appended to signed minutes).

The PUSH Interim Managing Director advised that the District Auditor's report on the PUSH Statement of Accounts for 2008/09 included conclusions on how effective PUSH had been in achieving Value For Money, and set out a number of proposals for improving performance. The Action Plan attached to the report would be presented to the PUSH Joint Committee on 24 November 2009.

The Chief Executive of Southampton City Council explained that while the proposals may appear to be heavy handed, PUSH had to adopt them to achieve the improvements required. This was important, given that PUSH was responsible for public funds. Overall, the proposals were pragmatic.

It was AGREED that the District Auditor's report and the Improvement Action Plan, attached as Appendix A to the report, be NOTED.

## **9. ADJOURNMENT**

At 7:10pm, the Chairman requested a short adjournment. The meeting resumed at 7:17pm.

## **10. QUALITY PLACES DELIVERY PANEL**

The Committee received a presentation from Simon Eden, Chief Executive of Winchester City Council, on the Quality Places Delivery Panel. A copy of the presentation slides can be found on the PUSH website at [www.push.gov.uk](http://www.push.gov.uk).

The presentation outlined PUSH's aims, such as its shared vision for economic growth and its insistence on the right transport and infrastructure. PUSH had accepted 80,000 new homes by 2026 and proposed more than five substantial

new communities where people wanted to live and work. PUSH was committed to providing sustainable communities and to creating quality places.

The Committee was advised that the Quality Places Delivery Panel was created approximately two and a half years ago. It looked at culture, not just within local authorities but in a cross sector group of organisations. The Panel was now more formal and chaired by Councillor Vernon-Jackson of Portsmouth City Council. The Panel saw itself as an enabler and facilitator.

The Panel had started with a series of ideas and had shaped some objectives and a business plan. Some useful work had been commissioned by an arm's length group, Audience South, which had carried out a mapping of cultural assets in South Hampshire, and Constancy Agenda UK who prepared the PUSH Cultural Strategy, which is essentially a SWOT analysis of the PUSH Cultural offer. These two pieces of work have led the Panel to take a more strategic approach to its work.

Push has also been identified as a Priority Place by the National Living Places Partnership ([www.living-places.org.uk](http://www.living-places.org.uk)). The Partnership is made up of The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG), The Department for Culture Media and Sport, Arts Council England, The Museum Library and Archive Council MLA, Sport England, English Heritage and The Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE). Living Places also works closely with the Homes and Communities Agency HCA.

The priority places were identified to enable partners to learn how the e-cultural and design in the built environment agenda could support the Sustainable Communities agenda in a range of situations.

Five Priority Places had been identified:-

- The Pennine Lancashire - Housing Renewal Pathfinder;
- Corby - as a single district in a growth area;
- The South West Region;
- The Thames Gateway as a growth area; and
- PUSH as a growth point and MAA area.

The employment of the Cultural Co-ordinator and Quality Places Delivery Manager was part funded by Living Places and has enabled the Panel to drive forward its component of the business plan.

Following the Publication of the Cultural Strategy the Panel adopted 7 themes:-

Developing Excellence:

Under this heading 3 key priorities have been identified:-

- The Maritime tradition which builds on Portsmouth harbour's role as the Home of the Navy, Southampton's role as the nation's premier cruise port and the Solent as the most popular sailing destination in the UK;
- The regions passion for Sport, including the Rose Bowl as a Test Venue, Southampton as a Rugby World Cup Venue 2016, Portsmouth as Potential 2018-2022 World Cup venue, and world class facilities and clubs

supporting Olympic and paralympic athletes in swimming diving sailing, gymnastics and athletics; and

- Internationally significant ambition for cultural regeneration in both Portsmouth and Southampton, including Gunwarf, the historic dockyard, the creative campus at Portsmouth university and the redevelopment of the New Theatre Royal, The Northern above bar initiative and the Proposed new Maritime History Museum in Southampton.

#### Promoting Access:

This allowed the Panel to look at what was available and how to encourage higher levels of usage.

#### Promoting Participation for All:

This area of the business plan focuses on widening the breadth of participation in particular engaging people from deprived communities and low participation groups.

#### Advocacy:

This was about integrating the quality places agenda in the work of PUSH e.g. the Single Conversation and the MAA.

#### Creating Quality Places:

Urban design was very important in the area, if communities were to work, they needed to be well designed. The Panel had worked with CABE to promote design and architecture to raise the standard of the built environment in the area.

#### Supporting the Creative and Cultural Economy:

This included creative industries, which are very wide ranging and include architecture, crafts, software (computer games etc), all of which are high value added sectors. The Panel wanted to build on areas of strength, such as the design element of the leisure yacht industry, digital media and fashion.

#### Supporting the Visitor Economy:

This was also linked to economic development. Work includes a study which will support work to maximise benefits to the region arising from the 2012 Solent Sailing corridor.

Some members were concerned that while the Panel was considering Quality Places, it was not paying attention to Quality Homes, which was very important. The development of small houses was not giving young people the space they needed.

Mr Eden explained that this was being addressed and a joint Panel had been set up in West Waterlooville to consider the problem. He also advised that it

was intended that CAGE would be encouraged by local authorities to become involved in their emerging LDFs.

The Chairman thanked Mr Eden for his presentation.

A member asked if the work of any of the other four Delivery Panels would be presented to future meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and it was AGREED that the Economic Development Delivery Panel would make a presentation to the next meeting.

*(The meeting started at 6:15pm and ended at 8:18pm).*