

Media Release

From the Partnership for Urban South Hampshire
www.push.gov.uk



17 June 2011

PUSH hosts a European Parliament Visit

PUSH (the Partnership for Urban South Hampshire) on 15th June 2011, hosted a delegation of 7 Members of the European Parliament. The MEPs (Members of the European Parliament) were represented from across Europe and are also members of the Regional Development Committee. The event was organised predominantly as a fact finding visit to the UK to see projects supported by European funding in action as well as to get a better understanding of the difficulties which organisations encounter in applying for funding from Europe and how these can be overcome. The European delegates were keen to visit South Hampshire and the Isle of Wight as areas of interest, particularly as the sub region does not currently benefit from the high levels of EU funding when compared to other areas. The delegation was led by Catherine Bearder, MEP for the South East.

In addition to representatives from PUSH, led by Councillor Tony Briggs, the Leader of Havant Borough Council and also PUSH's lead for Economic Development, representatives from the Solent Local Enterprise Partnership, Business, Higher Education and the voluntary sector were also invited to meet the delegation.

The delegation focussed its attention on how Europe could improve its funding application process to enable areas such as South Hampshire and the IOW to benefit from potential funding opportunities available for a wide range of initiatives including skills and training, research and development, environmental technologies and support to small and medium sized enterprises, though funds generally operate within specific criteria.

PUSH Lead for Economic Development, Councillor Tony Briggs, said:

“This was a great opportunity to set out our plans to raise the economic profile and competitiveness of South Hampshire and the Isle of Wight and explore how we might secure a greater degree of support from Europe in delivering them. It was a very productive discussion with genuine interest from the MEPs in what we are doing here”.

Chairman of PUSH, Councillor Seán Woodward, Said:

“PUSH remains committed to sustainable economic growth and the creation of local jobs for local people and in doing so welcomes visits such as this that provides the Partnership with the opportunity to explore and tap into potential European investment towards delivery of key initiatives of benefit to residents in the sub region. The Partnership will continue to maintain its relationship with Europe to ensure that some of its ambitions can be realised through potential European funding opportunities”.

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Notes to the Editor

PUSH

1. PUSH is a partnership of eleven local authorities including unitary authorities of Portsmouth, Southampton and Isle of Wight; Hampshire County Council and the district authorities of Eastleigh, East Hampshire, Fareham, Gosport, Havant, Test Valley and Winchester.
2. PUSH in collaboration with local partners and government agencies continue to work to deliver sustainable, economic-led growth and regeneration to create a more prosperous, attractive and sustainable South Hampshire, which offers a better quality of life for all who live, work and spend their leisure time in the sub region. For more information, please visit www.push.gov.uk
3. For more information about MEP's please visit <http://www.europarl.org.uk/section/your-meps/your-meps>