

Media Release

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



5th March 2012

PUSH Employment and Skills Board appoint four new private sector members to its Board

The Partnership of Urban South Hampshire (PUSH) is delighted to welcome four new members to its Employment and Skills Board (ESB). The ESB is a collaboration that brings together public and private stakeholders committed to transforming the Solent region's economy by anticipating and satisfying the employment and skills needs of employers within the Solent Region and by developing and retaining the talents of people to work within their local economy.

New members; Abigail Thomson Client Manager for the global HR services group Penna Plc., Brian Luff Chairman of Critical Software Technologies, Heidi Southwell HR and Communications Director for Warings and Ken Moon Chairman of the Wessex Federation of Small Businesses were formally welcomed by Professor Debra Humphris, Chair of the ESB and Pro-Vice Chancellor of Education at the University of Southampton.

Strong private sector representation is crucial to the progression of the PUSH Employment and Skills Board as it aims to achieve sustainable economic growth by anticipating and meeting the employment and skills needs of employers within the Solent region. The objective of bringing employer requirements to the heart of the employment and skills provision and the need for the ESB to benefit from business acumen, necessitates a strong level of private sector representation.

The new Employment and Skills Board members come from a range of key sectors and local small to medium enterprises. They will be invaluable to help progress the aims of the ESB. The new Board members will work with existing Board members to deliver their objectives which include strengthening education business links from school to adult learning, improving the work readiness of young people and adults and simplifying the employment and skills system to make it easier for employers and learners to engage.

Together shaping the future of South Hampshire

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Professor Debra Humphris said:

“I am delighted to welcome my new colleagues on the Board and I look forward to working together with them to ensure that the Solent region fulfils its potential for securing sustainable growth, and within this, ensure that local residents are equipped to take up the jobs that are created.”

“The PUSH Economic Development strategy has demonstrated that we can no longer rely on the public purse to support business activities. It is clear that we must look at new models of delivery, using the entrepreneurial and business expertise already in the sub-region. The ESB will therefore be able to facilitate sustained economic growth by adopting a greater focus on the opportunities which we can develop with small and medium enterprises (SMEs).”

The new private sector Board members are due to step onto the Board at the next Employment and Skills Board meeting, which is to be held in May.

Chairman of PUSH, Councillor Seán Woodward said: “The Employment and Skills Board is working to support the Solent Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) in the promotion of skills for growth to ensure that we support job creation in the area. Such joint working builds on our strong track record and it is logical for the Board to develop links to the wider agenda of business support and enterprise development, so that employment and skills issues are placed in the wider context of economic development. I am delighted to welcome our new colleagues on the Board. In taking these steps, it will ensure that the ESB continues to make a tangible and positive impact on the local economy.”

Ends

For further information on PUSH or the ESB, please contact Hannah Saunders via email to Hannah.Saunders@push.gov.uk

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Notes to Editors

- 1) PUSH is a partnership of eleven local authorities including unitary authorities of Portsmouth and Southampton; Hampshire County Council and 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.

- 3) **Employment and Skills Board members are as follows**
Debra Humphris – University of Southampton
Chris Allington – Oxford Innovations
Cllr Tony Briggs – Havant Borough Council
Huw Chapman – Pall Europe
Jonathan Cheshire – Wheatsheaf
Ashley Curzon – Isle of Wight Council
Graham Ellis – Ellis Transport
Debby Gill – Jobcentre Plus
Steve Grant – De Vere Hotels
Stella Mbubaegbu – Highbury College
Anne-Marie Mountifield – Executive Director of PUSH and Executive Lead for the Solent LEP
Fiona Willmot – Skills Funding Agency
Abigail Thomson – Penna Plc.
Brian Luff - Critical Software Technologies
Heidi Southwell – Warings
Ken Moon – Chairman of the Wessex Federation of Small Businesses