



Partnership for Urban South Hampshire

Office of the Executive Leader, Fareham Borough Council,
Civic Offices, Civic Way, FAREHAM, Hampshire PO16 7PU

T: 01329 824752 M: 07803 222845 F: 01329 824354

email: swoodward@fareham.gov.uk

Mrs Cathy Evans
Area Director, Hampshire & Isle of Wight
Government Office for the South East
Bridge House
1 Walnut Tree Close
GUILDFORD
GU1 4GA

5 November 2007

Dear Cathy

MULTI-AREA AGREEMENT IN PUSH

Thank you for your letter of 11 September asking whether PUSH wishes to be included in the first wave of local authority partnerships looking to establish a Multi-Area Agreement (MAA) by June 2008.

Political Commitment

As you know, this was discussed at the PUSH Leaders' and Chief Executives' Panel on 26 September, together with a paper prepared by Brad Roynon that set out the basis on which PUSH might develop an MAA. I can confirm that there was unanimous agreement from the Panel that PUSH should proceed to participate in the first wave of MAAs.

Commitment of sub-regional partners

You have also asked about the extent of commitment from other sub regional partners who will need to participate. Officers from PUSH have had constructive conversations with Job Centre Plus and the Learning and Skills Council, who would both be key partners in the delivery of outcomes covered by an MAA. Both have expressed support for the principle of developing a PUSH-level MAA. We are also working with Transport for South Hampshire, as the strategic transport 'arm' of PUSH.

Themes covered by the MAA

The themes we would like an MAA to cover would, we propose, be based on those set out in the PUSH Business Plan and relevant components of the Transport for South Hampshire (TfSH) Business Plan.

Cont/.....

The PUSH Business Plan is work in progress and will draw from the Programme of Development prepared for DCLG and Economic Development work being drawn together by DTZ based on work carried out with PUSH partners earlier in the summer. PUSH will exercise the powers and functions delegated under the PUSH Joint Agreement in accordance with the Business Plan: the Business Plan is therefore the core document.

The areas under which powers and functions are delegated to PUSH are:

- **Generic Functions:**
 - Business Planning and Partnership Development
 - Information, studies and analysis
 - External Relations & Communications
 - Knowledge Transfer
 - Promoting delivery of infrastructure
 - External Funding

- **Thematic Functions**
 - Economic Development
 - Housing
 - Planning
 - Sustainability
 - Culture

Strategic transport issues are led by TfSH, which is a Joint Committee of the three Transport Authorities. So an MAA would therefore also need to cover the relevant elements of the TfSH Business Plan.

We would expect the primary focus of a PUSH MAA to be Economic Development and those aspects of housing, strategic planning and transport that will support delivery of objectives derived from the South Hampshire sub-regional strategy.

The PUSH Joint Agreement makes clear that PUSH's remit relates to cross-boundary issues, or activities that are more effectively addressed on a multi-authority or sub-regional basis. Matters that are better addressed locally will continue to be done by the individual local authorities.

On this basis, the PUSH MAA would cover substantial elements of the Economic Development and Enterprise Block of the three existing Local Area Agreements (LAAs). But there would be residual and more localised activity under the EDE Block that would remain covered by the LAAs, complementing what is in the MAA. Similarly, strategic planning, housing, sustainability and cultural activities might be included in the MAA; the relationship between the MAA and LAAs on these issues remains to be explored. The other main blocks of the present LAAs – Safer & Stronger Communities, Healthy Communities and Older People, and Children and Young People – would remain covered by the three LAAs though some specific elements (e.g. in relation to skills aspects of the 14-19 agenda) might be included in the MAA.

Funding Streams

Clearly much further thought needs to be given to which funding streams might be pooled or aligned to support the MAA. Our initial view, without drawing any conclusions as to whether pooled or aligned, is that delivery of the MAA will require:

- New Growth Point Funding
- A proportion of Local Authority economic development funding
- Various Job Centre Plus funding streams, including New Deals
- European Social Fund projects supporting employment and reducing economic inactivity
- Various Learning & Skills Council funding, including Train to Gain, Skills for Life, Capital Investment Programmes etc
- Elements of HFEI funding programmes
- SEEDA sub-regional investment programmes
- Regional Housing Board allocations
- Housing Corporation allocations
- DfT programme funding
- Selected Environment Agency funding

Governance Structures

As you know, the PUSH Joint Committee is due to come into effect later in November, subject to ratification by all the local councils. The Joint Committee will be ultimately responsible for delivery of the PUSH Business Plan, and would therefore have the same accountability with regard to delivery of MAA outcomes. The detailed structural relationships that sit below the Joint Committee are still under discussion and we are keen – as indicated in our Programme of Development – that DCLG and GOSE should engage with us in those discussions to help ensure our delivery arrangements are fully fit for purpose. In particular, where delivery of interventions depends upon other partners we need to ensure that arrangements (whether contractual or otherwise) are robust.

Conclusion

Achieving a PUSH MAA by June 2008 will be a significant challenge, but we believe it is a prize worth seeking in terms of the opportunities to re-shape service provision and delivery in a more strategically focused way in South Hampshire, and to secure firm commitment from Government Departments and national and regional agencies.

We would very much welcome further discussion with you at the earliest opportunity. It would also be helpful to have further information about how the process is to be handled in GOSE and DCLG, and what the expected milestones are likely to be. There is a small team of key officers coordinating this work for PUSH, led by Brad Roynon, whom I suggest should be your first point of contact. I gather that you have an initial meeting scheduled for 6th November.

I will keep closely in touch with progress. The MAA will, of course, require the approval of the PUSH Joint Committee in due course.

I am copying this to the PUSH Leaders and Chief Executives.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Seán Woodward". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Councillor Seán D T Woodward
Chairman
Partnership for Urban South Hampshire