



# **Report to the Partnership for Urban South Hampshire Joint Committee**

Date: **6 June 2013**

Report of: **Stuart Roberts, Interim PUSH Executive Director**

Subject: **Interim PUSH Executive Director's report**

## **SUMMARY**

This report covers matters which are significant and merit reporting to the Joint Committee, but do not justify a full report in their own right. This report is in two parts: part A deals with issues on which a decision is needed, while part B sets out matters for information.

Part A seeks the Joint Committee's decision to appoint two Members as the local authority representatives on the Employment and Skills Board.

Part B informs the Committee about the progress in commissioning the Strategic Housing Market Assessment, the intention to produce an analysis of 2011 Census data for the PUSH area, and Government announcements about the mechanisms for distributing local area funding.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

It is RECOMMENDED that the Joint Committee:

1. **RESOLVES** to appoint Councillor Trevor Cartwright (Fareham Borough Council) and Councillor Matt Tucker (Southampton City Council) as the local authority representatives on the Employment and Skills Board; and
2. **NOTES** the matters for information, contained in Part B of this report.

## **PART A: MATTERS FOR DECISION**

### **Representation on the Employment and Skills Board**

1. The terms of reference for the Employment and Skills Board (ESB) specify that the Board's membership should comprise seventeen members including two local authority representatives. The latter have been Councillors Tony Briggs (Havant) and Gerald Vernon-Jackson (Portsmouth), but both have resigned and replacements need to be appointed.
2. Although the ESB's terms of reference are being refreshed following its transfer to the Solent LEP's stewardship, it is anticipated that the Board will continue to have two seats for local authority representatives with the expectation that one of those will be a Portsmouth or Southampton City Council representative given the cities' skill development needs. The Memorandum of Understanding between PUSH and the Isle of Wight Council which was signed last July commits the two parties to work together on skills activity, and thus the Isle of Wight Council needs to be involved in the nomination by PUSH of the replacement local authority representatives on the ESB.
3. Informal discussions including with the Isle of Wight Council have yielded two nominations for the two vacant seats: they are Councillor Trevor Cartwright (Fareham Borough Council) and Councillor Matt Tucker (Southampton City Council). This meeting is asked to appoint these two Members as the local authority representatives on the Employment and Skills Board.

## **PART B: MATTERS FOR INFORMATION**

### **Strategic Housing Market Assessment update**

4. The last Joint Committee meeting resolved to commission a Strategic Housing Market Assessment for South Hampshire and agreed to budget £100,000 for the work. The subsequent tendering for the commission resulted in the appointment of a consortium of GL Hearn and Justin Gardner Consulting. G L Hearn are a major, long established property consultancy with wide experience of analysing housing market dynamics and providing strategic planning advice, while Justin Gardner Consulting have specific expertise in undertaking housing needs assessments and demographic modelling. Their successful tender is substantially below the £100,000 budgetary provision, which given that a SHMA for a single authority would typically cost around £15,000-20,000, underlines how economies can be achieved through partnership working. The consultants are due to present their draft report to PUSH this summer with a final report following in the autumn.
5. In response to a request at the Joint Committee meeting, the tender documentation included this requirement: "*PUSH is keen to facilitate and maximise training opportunities within South Hampshire including via its high calibre universities. To that end, consultants are asked to consider whether South Hampshire universities' post-graduate students in appropriate disciplines could be utilised in some of the SHMA tasks*". In their tender, the appointed consultants state that "*we are aware that Southampton University has an excellent Social*

*Statistics and Demography department and believe that there may be some scope for staff/students in this department to critically assess and help to develop the demographic projection work to be undertaken within this project.” This matter was due to be discussed further at the inception meeting with the consultants.*

6. The 2005 South Hampshire SHMA covered the then PUSH area and thus included the waterside part of New Forest District. The Southampton housing market includes the waterside, so it is logical for the new SHMA to do the same. The report to the last Joint Committee meeting mentioned that PUSH officers would explore whether New Forest District Council wished to participate in the SHMA subject to an appropriate financial contribution. That Council has accepted the PUSH invitation and an appropriate financial contribution has been agreed.

### **Census 2011 data**

7. Following recent releases, most of the data from the 2011 Census of Population is now available. The Census reveals that the population of Hampshire increased by 7 per cent during 2001-2011 (similar to the national average) yet the number of people aged 65 and over rose by 21 per cent. There have been population increases in all the PUSH authorities, but notably in Portsmouth and Southampton. Full analysis of the Census data for Hampshire is available on Hampshire County Council's website at: [http://www3.hants.gov.uk/factsandfigures/population-statistics/census\\_pages/census\\_2011.htm](http://www3.hants.gov.uk/factsandfigures/population-statistics/census_pages/census_2011.htm)
8. In mid-April, I attended an excellent County Council seminar which provided an insight into the range of data available from the 2011 Census and its implications for service planning and delivery. There were speakers from the Office for National Statistics, Public Health and a Borough Council as well as from the County Council's Research and Intelligence team. The event highlighted to me the crucial importance of the Census data to many current and future PUSH projects. However, obtaining statistics relating to the PUSH area is complicated by the area including only part of three PUSH authorities – East Hampshire, Test Valley and Winchester – which thus requires complex manipulation of the data.
9. Recognising the County Council's expertise in this field, I contacted them to enquire whether they could undertake this data manipulation to create an analysis 'pack' which provides data for each PUSH authority (or part thereof) and the PUSH area as a whole, in easy-to-assimilate graphs and tables. The County Council responded positively in principle to the request and has offered to discuss what is possible, although it is experiencing high demand for such analysis and capacity to do this work will need to be part of that discussion. My intention is that the 'headlines' from that analysis should be presented to a future meeting of this Joint Committee.

### **Local Growth initiatives**

10. I reported orally to the last Committee meeting on the Government's response, announced a few days previously, to the Lord Heseltine report 'No Stone Unturned' on how wealth might more effectively be created. Key elements of that Government response were confirmation that elements of transport, housing and skills funding will be included in a Single Local Growth Fund which would provide bloc funding to local areas and that each LEP will prepare a strategic

multi-year Strategic Growth Plan which will provide the basis for negotiations between the Government and the LEP for levers, resources and flexibilities.

11. The Single Local Growth Fund is to be created from April 2015. The amount of funding provided to each locality will depend in large part on the quality of the proposals put forward by its LEP in its Strategic Local Growth Plan as well as the degree of commitment of local authorities to work more efficiently and effectively across the LEP area. LEPs need to have completed their Plans by the end of this year, with negotiations on funds taking place during 2014. Government has stated that LEPs must consult with partners including local authorities in preparing their Growth Plans but publication of the more detailed guidance on the format of the Plans is still awaited. PUSH and its constituent authorities thus have a direct interest in supporting and assisting the Solent LEP in preparing its Growth Plan, as it will influence the amount of Government funding which will be allocated to this area.
  
12. Reflecting its embrace of Lord Heseltine's call for decentralisation, the Government announced in April that funding from the European Union Structural and Investment Funds for the period 2014-2020 will be largely devolved to LEPs. To that end, The Government has requested each LEP to prepare a EU Structural and Investment Funds Strategy which sets out how money from the EU funds would be spent. This strategy, which will eventually form part of the wider growth plan described above, must be submitted by the end of September 2013. The Solent LEP intends to bring partners together in June and July this year to inform the preparation of its draft document.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

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2. **NOTES** the matters for information, contained in Part B of this report.

### **Background Papers:**

None

### **Reference Papers:**

None

### **Enquiries:**

For further information on this report please contact

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