



Report to the Partnership for Urban South Hampshire Joint Committee

Date: **15 March 2016**

Report of: **Gloria Ighodaro, PUSH Executive Director**

Subject: **PUSH Executive Director Report**

SUMMARY

The Executive Director's report provides an opportunity for issues which are significant, but do not justify a full report in their own right, to be brought to the attention of the Joint Committee for decision or for information. The report is divided into Parts A and B accordingly.

RECOMMENDATION

It is RECOMMENDED that the Joint Committee:

1. APPROVES an officer resource being offered by HCC to lead on the PUSH Green Infrastructure agenda and act as a link to the SRMP on behalf of PUSH;
2. DELEGATES authority to the PUSH Executives Director in collaboration with the PUSH Chairman; to agree the work programme that the officer will be required to undertake; and
3. NOTES the matters for Information outlined in Part B of this report.

PART A: MATTERS FOR DECISION

PUSH Resource required for Green Infrastructure agenda and related work

1. The PUSH Green Infrastructure Implementation Plan, approved by the Joint Committee in October 2012, identified 13 Green Infrastructure (GI) projects of strategic importance. The purpose of establishing a Framework was to enable PUSH to focus its resource and efforts to support the lead organisations in bidding for external funding to deliver a small number of key projects. As part of the Solent LEP's round one Growth Deal settlement, a total funding allocation of £1.5m was secured to support the PUSH GI schemes, all of which are inextricably linked to the work programme of the Solent Recreation and Mitigation Partnership (SRMP). Subsequent to a thorough appraisal process, the Solent LEP agreed to fund four major GI schemes identified in the Framework, some of which had previously received PUSH funding for feasibility and capital enabling works. These projects include: Alver Valley, Gosport, Manor Farm, Hamble; Manor House Farm, Lower Test Valley and Horsea Island, Portsmouth.
2. Much of the above work was previously managed by an officer in Test Valley BC as the operational theme lead for Infrastructure supporting the work of the PUSH Planning and Infrastructure Delivery Panel. This officer has since left the Council and a replacement is now required to build on the achievements to date and drive forward the Green Infrastructure agenda whilst also facilitating the work of the SRMP on behalf of PUSH. In response to approaching the PUSH Chief Executives on nominating an officer with the relevant expertise and experience, Hampshire County Council has kindly made an in principle offer to assign one of its experienced officers to take on the role, subject to Joint Committee approval. If approved, the officer will support the PUSH Executive Director in facilitating the work of the PUSH Planning and Infrastructure Delivery Panel as and when required. The officer has a wealth of experience in leading on environmental projects and programmes and has worked with Areas Of Natural Beauty (AONB) bodies and is proactively involved with their boards and runs a number of project related steering groups.
3. The Joint Committee is recommended to APPROVE an officer resource being offered by HCC to lead on the PUSH Green Infrastructure agenda and act as a link to the SRMP on behalf of PUSH. The Joint Committee is also asked to DELEGATE authority to the PUSH Executives Director in collaboration with the PUSH Chairman; to agree the work programme that the officer will be required to undertake.

PART B: MATTERS FOR INFORMATION

Spatial Strategy Review Update

4. The PUSH Spatial Strategy will set out the overall need for development in South Hampshire to 2036, and propose a broad strategy to distribute that development to Councils, taking account of all relevant strategic planning factors. In 2014 GL Hearn were appointed to lead on this work, and with the PUSH Planning Officers and other key agencies have made substantial progress in evidence gathering and discussing the potential distribution of development.
5. The Review remains well underway and a full report is anticipated to be presented at the PUSH Joint Committee meeting in June. Subject to Joint Committee approval to undertake a public consultation exercise in the summer of 2016, the Draft PUSH Spatial Strategy document will be published alongside the supporting evidence based studies.

Solent Productivity and Growth Supplement

6. The Solent LEP, at its Annual Growth conference in January, launched its Productivity and Growth Supplement as the basis for wider engagement with public and private sector partners in the Solent. Together with the publication of the Solent LEP's Annual Report, the event showcased the LEPs achievements to date in supporting local growth through the delivery of its public / private sector funded programmes including Growing Places Fund and Regional Growth Fund Programmes, Local Growth Deal, European Structural Investment Fund and the Southampton and Portsmouth City Deal. The new Solent Productivity supplement will act as a starting point for agreeing future local priorities with local partners, encouraging long-term investment in economic capital to support infrastructure, skills and knowledge transfer. Upskilling the local labour market and facilitating a dynamic economy that promotes innovation and flow of resources to productive use remains a vital ingredient to growing the Solent economy.
7. The Supplement identifies six strategic priorities aimed at enabling an enterprising economy, building on the area's growth and productivity potential. These priorities include: Business support, Infrastructure, Skills, Innovation, Inward Investment and Strategic sectors. The supplement acts as a precursor to the eventual refresh of the current Solent Strategic Economic Plan due to conclude by 2017. To download a copy of the full document, please visit the Solent LEP website at:
http://solentlep.org.uk/uploads/documents/Solent_LEP_Productivity_and_Growth_Supplement_WEB_VERSION.pdf
8. The outcome of the UK's European referendum scheduled to take place on 23 June 2016 will undoubtedly play a pivotal role in how the Solent area positions its revised Economic Plan to reflect national and international status on trade and industry, boosting productivity and the creation of high value jobs. Other external factors to consider will include the price of oil and how this impacts on businesses that import and export goods and services between the UK and European markets. PUSH continues to complement and support the LEP in driving forward sustainable economic growth working within the well-established and joint governance arrangements to deliver better access to employment and skills. Other key priorities include unlocking land, property and infrastructure to support housing delivery and employment floor space, inward investment, innovation and low carbon agenda. PUSH's democratic leadership and contribution will undoubtedly prove important in revising the Solent Strategic Economic Plan refresh.

PUSH Response to South Western Rail Franchise Stakeholder Consultation

9. Attached as Annex A to this report, is the South Western Rail Franchise Consultation document launched by the Department for Transport on 12 November 2015. The aim of the consultation was to seek feedback and input on future priorities for the next South Western Rail Franchise. In addition, the consultation sought to:
- Engage Passengers, local authorities and businesses in the South East and South West of England to help shape plans for rail services between London and the south-west. Key to this ambition is proposed major improvements planned to tackle overcrowding and provide better, more convenient journeys.
 - Outline the planned process and timescales for awarding the rail franchise
 - Provide background information about the current franchised services and the strategic goals for the new franchise
 - Seek views from interested parties on the current franchise and options that could be further developed to inform the specification for the invitation to tender (ITT).
10. A detailed PUSH response is attached as annex B to this report. The PUSH response provided the platform to highlight to Government the potential economic growth opportunities in the Solent area within the context of the Solent Economic Plan, the 2014 PUSH Strategic Housing Market Area (SHMA) and the emerging PUSH Spatial Strategy Review. Improving the East to West rail connectivity is vital to ensuring the two Cities of Portsmouth and Southampton continue to strive to punch above its economic weight.

RECOMMENDATION

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2. DELEGATES authority to the PUSH Executives Director in collaboration with the PUSH Chairman; to agree the work programme that the officer will be required to undertake; and
3. NOTES the matters for Information outlined in Part B of this report.

Background Papers:

- PUSH Spatial Strategy Review Update, Item 9; December 2015 Joint Committee
- PUSH Executive Director's report, Item 7; January 2016 Joint Committee

Enquiries:

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