

Solent LEP EU Structural Funds Survey 2014-2020

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1. Contact details

1. Name
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2. Organisation
Partnership for Urban South Hampshire

3. Position
Programme and Information Manager

2. Institutional questions

4. Has your organisation been involved in delivering EU programmes / projects under the current programmes?

Yes

4.a. If so, how?

PUSH is a partnership of twelve local authorities working collaboratively with other statutory and private sector organisations including the Solent LEP, across the Solent area. For over a decade, the partnership has maintained its strong track record in delivering a range of schemes related to regeneration and renewal; public realm activities; sustainability and employment and skills some of which have been matched by European Funding. PUSH therefore plays an important enabling role in setting strategic priorities and brokering the development of partnerships, assembling priority projects and providing the capacity to deliver outcome driven schemes in response to the strategic priorities. PUSH local authorities and the wider PUSH family take responsibility for the delivery of projects. A PUSH EU Collaboration group has existed for two years and meets regularly to promote EU funding opportunities to members of PUSH. In doing so, the Group actively seek partners for projects, broker partnerships and evaluate the impact of EU funding locally. This group has therefore developed expertise in delivering EU projects and understanding of EU programmes and priorities and is an important resource for the Solent LEP area.

PUSH is also currently an active member of the Southern England Local Partners (SELP) and has been since 2011. The role of SELP is to help its members get the most from UK membership of the European Union. Using its offices in Brussels, SELP has enabled PUSH to gain access to information and benefit from EU policy and programmes, contacts and exchange best practice with EU partners. Through the two Cities of Southampton and Portsmouth and also Eastleigh Borough Council, PUSH has to date secured a total of £3m from various European sources (predominantly ESF and ERDF) which has helped to support various schemes in these areas including Building EU Environmental & Maritime Skills (BEEMS) project in Southampton, Creative Enterprises project in Eastleigh and Combined Heat and Power Technology led by Hampshire County Council. In addition, Southampton City Council has for over a decade partnered in a series of EU Projects related to their energy and sustainability functions. These include the Green and Blue Space Adaptation for Urban Areas and Eco Towns (GRaBS) project (which won a REGIOSTARS award) and the ongoing Intelligent Energy Europe (IEE) project for Leadership in Energy Action and Planning (LEAP). Southampton City is a multiplier organisation in the new SPECIAL (Spatial Planning for Energy and Communities in all Landscapes) project.

5. Does your organisation aspire to be involved in delivering EU programmes / projects under the 2014-2020 programmes?

Yes

5.a. If so, how?

The role of PUSH is significant in brokering and designing projects in response to strategic priorities. Partner authorities and the PUSH family organisations take responsibility for delivery. As a partnership organisation equipped with the resources, skills and experience in managing EU funded schemes, PUSH starts from a position of strength and is therefore keen as a partnership to lead on a EU funded programme of schemes. As mentioned above, PUSH has already got a strong track record of delivering EU funded schemes and the Partnership therefore wishes to build on this foundation and bring together the concerted efforts of other local authorities within PUSH to ensure a joined up partnership approach to the delivery of EU funded schemes that will bring significant benefits to the Solent area as a whole. In anticipation that LEP's would be charged with managing EU funds for 2014-2020, PUSH have compiled a programme of schemes that it would wish to put forward for the put forward for EU funding support.

6. Is there a case for targeting the funding on specific geographical areas, e.g. areas affected by deprivation or where the opportunities are greatest?

Yes

6.a. If so, which areas and why?

PUSH would strongly advocate an approach which targets funding to stimulate investment and regeneration. Funding criteria need to ascertain value for money and leverage of private sector and other match funding, but also project deliverability and project effectiveness in the delivery of sustainable economic growth. Tackling deprivation is also a critical goal for PUSH and our regeneration and investment programmes are designed to ensure that there is a measurable impact on deprivation – and particularly on geographical pockets of deprivation within the PUSH area. In allocating its own funds, PUSH has successfully focussed its investments, be it capital or revenue, in those areas that needed it most using the criteria of number of homes and jobs created. As a consequence, the Partnership would support this targeted approach to allocating EU funding. There is also a case to be made for funding the delivery of schemes that have a sub regional bearing on the wider economic agenda such as flood risk and green infrastructure, which would bring about significant benefits in terms of protecting existing settlements and planned developments. PUSH would therefore urge that these schemes are considered on a case by case basis.

7. How important is it to collaborate with other LEPs?

Important

7.a. Which LEPs should we collaborate with and what on?

There may be a case for engaging with the M3 LEP in circumstances where a particular scheme being funded crosses the geographical boundary with that of M3 LEP. In this example, EU funding identified to deliver a specific EU thematic priority from both Solent LEP and M3 LEP would be pooled to deliver a particular scheme. The natural economic geography for some sectors such as aerospace would suggest partnership working with M3 LEP. Aside from what is stated above, PUSH would advocate concentrating the fund on schemes in the Solent LEP area mindful of the limited EU funding pot.

3. Strategy questions

8. The UK has identified ten priorities for the next programming period.

8.a. Innovation, Research and Technological Development -- If Solent had 100m euros to distribute across these ten priorities, how much funding would you allocate to each one?

5m

8.b. Enhancing access and use of ICTs -- If Solent had 100m euros to distribute across these ten priorities, how much funding would you allocate to each one?

5m

8.c. Support for small businesses -- If Solent had 100m euros to distribute across these ten priorities, how much funding would you allocate to each one?

10m

8.d. The low carbon Economy -- If Solent had 100m euros to distribute across these ten priorities, how much funding would you allocate to each one?

10m

8.e. Climate Change Adaptation e.g. flood risk / coastal management -- If Solent had 100m euros to distribute across these ten priorities, how much funding would you allocate to each one?

10m

8.f. Protecting the environment & promoting resource efficiency -- If Solent had 100m euros to distribute across these ten priorities, how much funding would you allocate to each one?

4m

8.g. Transport & infrastructure -- If Solent had 100m euros to distribute across these ten priorities, how much funding would you allocate to each one?

30m

8.h. Skills -- If Solent had 100m euros to distribute across these ten priorities, how much funding would you allocate to each one?

10m

8.i. Employment -- If Solent had 100m euros to distribute across these ten priorities, how much funding would you allocate to each one?

12m

8.j. Social Inclusion -- If Solent had 100m euros to distribute across these ten priorities, how much funding would you allocate to each one?

4m

9. Turning to skills - what skills do you think EU programmes should be focused on developing?

Lower level / **employability skills**

Intermediate /technical skills

9.a. Are there any skills gaps, skills shortages or gaps in provision that you think it is particularly important to address?

The PUSH Economic Development Strategy adopted in 2010 identifies Skills as a priority for the Solent area, particularly, the need to support young people, entrepreneurs and the Marine sector. No doubt the Solent LEP's emerging Strategic Economic Plan for the Solent / Skills Plan will seek to review need in due course. As a key partner on the Solent Employment and Skills Board, PUSH continues to work collaboratively with key partners to determine skills gaps and shortages. PUSH would therefore support using the Solent ESB as the vehicle for identifying the skills needed to boost the economy in the Solent to ensure that PUSH and other partners continue to play an active role in determining what skills are required for the area.

10. ESF has traditionally provided a high level of support to people who are furthest from the labour market. The new EU funds provide greater flexibility to focus resources on business support and generating growth. How important is it to maintain a focus on addressing social inclusion and linking those who are outside the labour market to local growth and jobs?

Very important

4. Sector questions

11. If you were faced with a choice between focusing EU funding on either a) employment rich or b) high growth sectors, what proportion would you invest in each? Please provide a numeric answer, totalling 100%. Thus if both are equally important answer 50%/50%.

11.a. Employment rich -- Proportion? (to equal 100)

60

11.b. High growth -- Proportion? (to equal 100)

40

12. The Solent LEP Strategy for Growth identifies Advanced engineering, Aerospace and Marine as being a priority for investment. How important is it to use EU Funds to develop this sector?

Important

13. Are there other sectors that you think EU funds should be focused on?

Yes

13.a. If yes, which sector?

Tourism employs 20,000 people in the Solent area, construction, housing, decentralised and renewable energy and creative industries (as promoters of apprenticeships, jobs and business growth). In 2008 the creative economy in the Solent area supported 18,000 jobs and 4,000 businesses. The recent independent report published by Centre for Cities in 2013, identifies employment in this sector grew by 60% between 2001 and 2011 and by 20% between the start of the credit crunch in 2007 and 2011.

5. Development and delivery questions

14. Are there any specific developments in the Solent area that you think EU funds should be focused on?

14.a. Science parks

No

14.a.i. Science parks -- If yes, please explain and describe the types of support that you feel are required.

14.b. The Solent Enterprise Zone

No

14.b.i. The Solent Enterprise Zone -- If yes, please explain and describe the types of support that you feel are required.

14.c. New areas of development land / roads

Yes

14.c.i. New areas of development land / roads -- If yes, please explain and describe the types of support that you feel

are required.
targeted at major strategic regeneration programmes, particularly on brownfield sites within the two cities and other urban areas.
14.d. Environmental Projects
Yes
14.d.i. Environmental Projects -- If yes, please explain and describe the types of support that you feel are required.
decentralised and renewable energy, energy efficient retrofit and flood risk management.
14.e. Other major investments
Yes
14.e.i. Other major investments -- If yes, please explain and describe the types of support that you feel are required.
particularly business incubation space.

15. It has been suggested that a programme of global grants, providing up to c. £12k to support community-led local development initiatives, should be included in the new programmes. Would you support this?
Yes

16. Solent LEP is keen to use some of the finance available to create a 'revolving fund', to invest in projects via loans or equity, rather than grants. a Would you support such an approach?
Yes
16.a. b ...and, if so, for what kinds of initiatives or projects?
Energy projects are able to generate a sustainable income and would be suitable. Other, commercially led regeneration projects would be equally suitable. PUSH has to date funded and supported a number of business incubators across the Solent, all of which are currently supporting graduates assisting them to bring their business ideas to market.

17. There are a wide range of activities that EU funds could support. On a scale of one to ten, with ten being the most important, how important do you think it is to invest in:
17.a. Enterprise support / New business start-ups -- On a scale of one to ten, how important do you think it is to invest in:
8
17.b. Promoting Inward investment -- On a scale of one to ten, how important do you think it is to invest in:
8
17.c. Infrastructure -- On a scale of one to ten, how important do you think it is to invest in:
10
17.d. The Solent Enterprise Zone -- On a scale of one to ten, how important do you think it is to invest in:
9
17.e. Export Support -- On a scale of one to ten, how important do you think it is to invest in:
8
17.f. Business Support for small and medium sized companies -- On a scale of one to ten, how important do you think it is to invest in:
7
17.g. Superfast broadband -- On a scale of one to ten, how important do you think it is to invest in:
4
17.h. Leadership and Management Training -- On a scale of one to ten, how important do you think it is to invest in:

1	
	17.i. Incubation space -- On a scale of one to ten, how important do you think it is to invest in:
8	
	17.j. Environmental protection -- On a scale of one to ten, how important do you think it is to invest in:
6	
	17.k. Developing the housing supply / Regeneration -- On a scale of one to ten, how important do you think it is to invest in:
10	
	17.l. Graduate retention -- On a scale of one to ten, how important do you think it is to invest in:
5	
	17.m. Apprenticeships -- On a scale of one to ten, how important do you think it is to invest in:
9	
	17.n. Science, Technology, Engineering & Maths Skills -- On a scale of one to ten, how important do you think it is to invest in:
5	
	17.o. Promoting energy efficiency -- On a scale of one to ten, how important do you think it is to invest in:
10	
	17.p. Information advice and guidance -- On a scale of one to ten, how important do you think it is to invest in:
3	
	17.q. People who are long-term unemployed -- On a scale of one to ten, how important do you think it is to invest in:
5	
	17.r. Response to Redundancy -- On a scale of one to ten, how important do you think it is to invest in:
5	
	17.s. Addressing Youth Unemployment -- On a scale of one to ten, how important do you think it is to invest in:
8	
	17.t. Low carbon technologies -- On a scale of one to ten, how important do you think it is to invest in:
9	

18. Is there anything else that you think should be a priority for EU investment?

PUSH recommends supporting schemes focussed on housing supply /regeneration, infrastructure, Low Carbon technology and apprenticeships.