



**Item 8**

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

**Date:** 27 January 2015

**Report of:** Adele Maher, Planning Policy & Urban Design Team Manager,  
Havant Borough Council

**Subject:** Update on the progress of the PUSH Spatial Strategy 2016 to 2036

## **SUMMARY**

At its March 2014 meeting, the Joint Committee authorised the appointment of a consultant to undertake the proposed programme of work for the new PUSH Spatial Strategy 2016-2036 to respond to the policies in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and the evidence contained in the PUSH Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) January 2014.

The new Spatial Strategy will update the existing South Hampshire Spatial Strategy 2012. It will take account of new information and changes to national planning policy including the LEP's Solent Economic Plan and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). It will also extend the Spatial Plan's timeframe taking it from 2026 to 2036, to provide support to emerging Local Plans in the PUSH area.

The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the progress of this work since it was last considered at September 2014 Joint Committee. The aim of this report is also to inform Joint Committee of relevant policy statements and decisions in the national and local planning policy arena that support the approach taken by PUSH in the production of the Spatial Strategy and also support its timely progress and completion,

## **RECOMMENDATION**

That PUSH Joint Committee NOTES the report.

## **PUSH SPATIAL STRATEGY 2016 TO 2036 PROGRESS REPORT**

1. Work on the Spatial Strategy 2016 to 2036 began in May 2014 with the appointment of consultant GLHearn. The consultants have since undertaken an evidence gathering exercise in cooperation with the PUSH Planning Officers Group and officers from the Solent LEP and Solent Transport, amongst others. The consultants are now embarking on the next stage of the project, which is options development.
2. The aim of the options development is to deliver a critical milestone highlighted in Table 1 below and will inform a public consultation exercise in July to August 2015 on a PUSH Spatial Strategy Options. The content and scope of the options consultation document will be directed by engagement and workshops with PUSH members in the spring and potentially in late May or June following the May 2016 elections.
3. The PUSH Leaders will consider the Spatial Strategy Options document at its meeting in July 2015 before being published in July 2015 for a public consultation, which will run until August 2015. PUSH will work with its partners to publicise the consultation to the best of its abilities; however it must be acknowledged that scope of the consultation will be dependent on the resources available. The consultation document will be published on the PUSH website, with associated press releases and a request that each constituent member of PUSH gives it local publicity. The consultation will last for 8 weeks.
4. In conclusion, progress on the PUSH Spatial Strategy 2016 to 2036 is on track and officers are confident that the Spatial Strategy will be approved in early 2016.

**Table 1: PUSH Spatial Strategy Project timetable**

May-Jun 14	An initial 8 week period to complete the Evidence Review
Jun-Sep 14	An estimated 4 month period to align and update the evidence base. There may be some unanticipated work here (depending on the results of the Evidence Review), but GLH are confident that this need not affect the overall timetable for options development.
Oct-Dec 14	Core work to develop options and undertake initial testing.
Jan-Feb 15	Officer and member workshops and engagement with statutory consultees.
Mar-May 15	Purdah period is recognised in the programme.
June 2015	Additional workshops (if required) to accommodate any changes amongst key members and sign off of the Options Appraisal document for public consultation.
Jul-Aug 15	Public consultation on the options.
Sep-Dec 15	Drafting the new Spatial Strategy.
Early 2016	Consultation on the Strategy, final amendments and adoption.

## **SUPPORT FOR THE PUSH SPATIAL STRATEGY**

### **Letter from the Minister of State for Housing and Planning to the Planning Inspectorate, 19 December 2014**

5. The Minister's letter (Appendix 1) aims to ensure that the evidence in Strategic Housing Market Assessments (SHMAs) is being interpreted correctly by the Planning Inspectorate, who is tasked with examining the soundness of Local Plans and determining contested decisions on planning applications.
6. The letter reiterates the Government's position that is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and National Planning Policy Guidance Note (NPPN): Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment.
7. It says that the evidence in the SHMA 'should not automatically be seen as a proxy for a final housing requirement in Local Plans', instead the SHMA should be viewed as an early piece of evidence prepared as part of plan making.
8. In addition, it states that the publications of the SHMA 'does not immediately or in itself invalidate housing numbers in existing Local Plans'. It explains that Councils 'can take account of constraints which indicate that development should be restricted'. The extent of the constraints and limitations would then need to be justified on a case by case basis.
9. The letter goes on to say that the publication of a SHMA provides a prompt for Councils 'to consider' whether the housing requirement in their Local Plans need to be revised. It is expected that proper consideration would take 'a reasonable' amount of time and was not something that could be carried out immediately after the publication of a SHMA. This evaluation would take into account constraints but also the need for co-operation with neighbouring planning authorities to meet the needs of the housing market area.
10. In conclusion, this letter supports and validates the approach being taken by PUSH in the development of the PUSH Spatial Strategy 2016 to 2036, which in turn will help local authorities defend challenges on housing numbers in their current and emerging Local Plans.

### **Fareham Development Sites and Policies Plan Local Plan and Welborne Area Plan Examination in Public, October to December 2014**

11. The examination in public into the soundness of these two development plan documents is still in running. As part of the examination, the Inspector has brought the Council's attention to a high court ruling, which is of relevance to PUSH.
12. The judgment between Gladman Development Limited vs Wokingham Borough Council, dated 11 July 2014 supports the progression of a part two Local Plan, where these are based on the targets already approved in a part one Local

Plan. In effect, it supports those PUSH authorities who are progressing part two Local Plan's that are taking forward growth set out in adopted part one Local Plans, which are based on the PUSH Spatial Strategy 2012 growth targets. The Inspectors letter to the Council and the council's legal view on the rules can be read in Appendix 2 and 3.

13. The Inspector's comments at the hearing prompted Fareham Borough Council to include a suggested modification to the development plans, which now makes a commitment to begin a review of the Local Plan depending on the outcome of the PUSH Spatial Strategy, when it is approved in early 2016

### **Eastleigh Local Plan Examination in Public, September to December 2014.**

14. The Inspector examining the soundness of Eastleigh Borough Council's Local Plan scrutinised the robustness of PUSH SHMA 2014, which form the starting point for the PUSH Spatial Strategy 2016 to 2036. In his Preliminary Conclusions report dated 28 November 2014 (Appendix 4, paragraphs 6 to 15) the Inspector considers that the SHMA is a sound piece of evidence and that its methodology and recommendations are appropriate and justified.
15. At this stage, the Council is considering its options taking the Local Plan forward in the light of the Inspector's Preliminary Conclusions report and Post Hearing Notes.

### **APPENDICES**

Appendix 1: Letter from the Minister of State for Housing and Planning to the Planning Inspectorate, 19 December 2014.

Appendix 2: Fareham Local Plan Part 2 and 3 Examination: Inspector's Question 1 for the Council, 16 July 2014.

Appendix 3: Fareham Local Plan Part 2 and 3 Examination: Council's response to Inspector's Question 1, 7 August 2014.

Appendix 4: Eastleigh Borough Local Plan 2011-2029 Examination: Inspector's Preliminary Conclusions on Housing Needs and Supply and Economic Growth, 28 November 2014.

**ENQUIRES:** For further information on this report please contact:

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