



Report to the Partnership for Urban South Hampshire Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date: 15 September 2015

Report of: Graham Tuck, PUSH Spatial Strategy Project Manager.

Subject: PUSH Spatial Strategy 2016 to 2036.

SUMMARY

At its March 2014 meeting, the Joint Committee authorised the appointment of a consultant to prepare the new PUSH Spatial Strategy to 2036.

The Strategy will identify the needs for further housing and economic development and a distribution of this development which is appropriate in transport / infrastructure and environmental terms. It will be informed by the latest national and Solent LEP policies and evidence; and will be key to meeting the requirement to update Local Plans.

This report covers:

1. An update on the preparation of the Strategy and progress made so far.
2. Funding towards a more detailed employment assessment.

RECOMMENDATION

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:

- a. NOTE the progress being made on the Spatial Strategy; and
- b. NOTE the provision of an additional £15,000 to support further assessment of employment land needs from the PUSH revenue core budget (this work is now underway).

1. UPDATE ON PROGRESS

Overview

- 1.1 Work on the PUSH Spatial Strategy to 2036 began in May 2014 with the appointment of consultant GL Hearn.
- 1.2 The Strategy will set out the employment and housing development needed to promote economic growth, jobs and homes for all. It will be focussed on achieving a renaissance of Portsmouth, Southampton and the other major urban areas, protecting the most important aspects of the environment and co-ordinating transport and other infrastructure. It will be the agreed basis for distributing the development needed to individual Councils, and will identify areas of search for key development locations.
- 1.3 The Strategy will replace and update the South Hampshire Strategy (2012) and extend the planning horizon from 2026 to 2036. It will take account of the National Planning Policy Framework, the LEP's Solent Economic Plan, and the PUSH Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA).
- 1.4 The Strategy will enable long term development needs to be addressed in a co-ordinated way which does most to maximise economic, environmental and infrastructure opportunities. It will also be a key factor enabling Councils to update their Local Plans consistent with national requirements.

Programme

- 1.5 The main steps in preparing the Strategy are as follows:

Table 1: Timetable

Completed:	
May-Sep 14	Review, align and update existing evidence.
Oct-Dec 14	Initial development of options.
Jan-June 15	Officer and member workshops / meetings. Engagement with statutory consultees.
Next Steps:	
Jul-Sept 15	Devising development distribution - discussions with Council planning teams.
Late Sept- Nov 15	Devising development distribution and drafting the new Spatial Strategy - discussions with PUSH Chief Executives / Leaders' Briefing Engagement with key statutory consultees (eg Solent LEP, Environment Agency and Natural England)
Dec 15	Approval by PUSH Joint Committee of the draft Strategy
Dec 15 - Feb 16	Public consultation on the draft Strategy
July 16	Approval by PUSH Joint Committee of the final Strategy

- 1.6 Since the last Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting on 26th May 2015 two aspects of the programme have changed, as a result of discussions at the PUSH Leaders Briefing:
1. There is now no longer a 1st stage 'Options' consultation, which would have taken place in the Summer of 2015. This will now take place as part of the consultation on the draft Strategy in Winter 2015 / 16. This ensures that engagement with the public is focussed on more specific proposals.
 2. Final approval of the Strategy is delayed from March until July 2016 to ensure adequate time to analyse comments from the public consultation, and adjust the Strategy as appropriate.
- 1.7 The aim of the Strategy is to provide a reasonable prospect that at a strategic level the overall scale of development and associated infrastructure can be delivered. Local Plans and the detailed planning of specific infrastructure will further test and confirm this. A substantial amount of evidence gathering, analysis and discussion has been completed. This includes assessments of housing and economic development needs and site supply, baseline transport and environmental factors (eg areas of traffic congestion, ecology designations, flood risk, etc). Further work is programmed on an employment land needs update (see below), transport and water infrastructure, and environmental appraisals. More detail is set out in Appendix 1.

Over the Summer and Autumn the PUSH Chief Planners and Planning Officers Group are meeting on a monthly basis. A series of individual meetings are also taking place between PUSH / Solent Transport / individual Councils. These meetings are exploring the issues around the potential distributions of development. This will then enable wider discussions with the PUSH Chief Executives and Leaders, leading to a decision on the approval of a draft Strategy for public consultation at the 9th December PUSH Joint Committee.

2 FURTHER EMPLOYMENT ASSESSMENT

It is anticipated that most of the evidence required for a robust sub regional strategy will be provided within the original budget. However there is considered to be a need for a further assessment of employment land needs.

- 2.1 The original brief to prepare the Spatial Strategy included a 'broad brush' assessment of employment land needs, to be informed by the LEP's Solent Economic Plan and with a particular focus on marine and logistics sectors. GL Hearn have already completed quantitative forecasts of the need for employment land (i.e. offices, industry and warehouses). These are on the same basis as the LEP's Solent Economic Plan forecasts and extended to 2036. They are also consistent with the PUSH Strategic Housing Market Assessment (the need for jobs and housing being closely linked).
- 2.2 The Spatial Strategy is being prepared in line with the Government's National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Since the brief for the Spatial

Strategy was prepared, the Government has issued further technical guidance to support the NPPF, including further detail on how Councils should work together to assess employment land needs.

- 2.3 Consequently it is recommended that the scope of the original brief is expanded to provide a more detailed assessment of employment land needs. The main areas of additional work will be to provide an analysis of the economic geography, composition and opportunities of different parts of South Hampshire; the growth potential of different sectors; the commercial property market (based on market price signals and the experience of local property agents; trends in development rates; and the availability / suitability of strategic employment sites to identify gaps in the supply of sites. (GL Hearn have already undertaken similar work for the Isle of Wight and so this additional work will cover the mainland).
- 2.4 The additional work will be informed by and not duplicate the LEP's Solent Economic Plan and Marine and Maritime study; and by Hampshire County Council's Strategic Employment Sites study.
- 2.5 The work will ensure that the Spatial Strategy's assessment of employment land needs is compliant with national policy and advice; consistent with the approach and aims of the LEP including the current refresh of the LEP Strategy; and is based on a realistic assessment of commercial opportunities (for example, the potential to promote city centre offices). In short it will provide a sound basis for the Spatial Strategy and subsequent Local Plans to justify the allocation of employment land to help promote economic growth in South Hampshire.
- 2.6 The existing commission to produce the Spatial Strategy is £125,000. The additional work is being undertaken by GL Hearn at a cost of £15,000, as approved by the PUSH Joint Committee on 9th June. This is considered to represent good value for money, reflecting GL Hearn's current involvement, and the use of the existing studies.

3. CONCLUSION

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:

- 3.1 NOTE the progress being made on the Spatial Strategy; and
- 3.2 NOTE the provision of an additional £15,000 to support further assessment of employment land needs study from the PUSH revenue core budget.

APPENDIX 1 - Progress on Technical Work

ENQUIRES: For further information on this report please contact:

Graham Tuck
PUSH Spatial Strategy Project Manager
023 92 841564