



Report to the Partnership for South Hampshire Joint Committee

Date: 10 February 2020

Report of: Claire Upton-Brown, Chairman PfSH Planning Officers Group

Subject: STATEMENT OF COMMON GROUND – PROGRESS

SUMMARY

This report provides an update on progress towards the Statement of Common Ground.

RECOMMENDATION

It is RECOMMENDED that the Joint Committee NOTES the progress made on the Statement of Common Ground set out in this report.

INTRODUCTION

1. The Joint Committee agreed a draft framework for the Statement of Common Ground (SoCG) at its meeting in October 2019. The report set out the need to hold a workshop for Leaders and Chief Executives to help identify and agree the issues that need to be resolved at a sub-regional scale and therefore the broad content of the new Joint Strategy.
2. The report also set out a broad, draft timetable for the five workstreams that were included in the draft framework for the SoCG.

PROGRESS MADE ON STATEMENT OF COMMON GROUND

3. A workshop for leaders and chief executives has now been arranged to take place immediately after this meeting. Work has progressed to the stage where the draft tender brief for the Strategic Development Opportunity Area (SDOA) assessments has been produced by the Planning Officers Group (POG). At the time of writing this report, the tender brief for the transport modelling and transport impact assessment work is still being developed, although substantial progress has been made, liaising with Solent Transport. It is anticipated that consultants can still be procured in Q1 this year, as set out in the draft timetable for the SoCG.
4. The Planning Officers Group set up a task and finish group to agree a process and then identify potential SDOAs to be assessed. The outcomes of this work have been considered by the POG and agreed, subject to some minor amendments to the conclusions. It should be noted that the schedule of potential SDOAs will not be made available to prospective bidders for the work. It will need to be made available to the appointed consultants at the inception meeting. However, the potential locations to be assessed will remain confidential. The POG were concerned about confidentiality in relation to Freedom of Information requests and sought legal advice. A response has been received which states,

'Whilst the work is "in progress" we can reasonably justify withholding publication should any Fol request come in. Authorities have to be able to work in a "safe space" and under the Fol regime that is well recognised.'

5. Progress has been slower for the economic, employment and commercial needs (including logistics) study, due to the need to understand the strategies and economic growth rates proposed by the Local Economic Partnerships (which will be contained in draft local economic strategies – expected in March). An initial review of the existing evidence base has established that a new study is required, rather than being able to update previous work or combine individual local plan evidence base studies. The POG will consider a report on a review of the existing evidence base at its next meeting before determining new evidence required.
6. The Chairman of the POG and/or the consultant project manager have now met representatives of all the key partner organisations¹ that will participate in

¹ Other than the Local Nature Partnership – meeting to be arranged.

joint working on the new Joint Strategy. The meetings have proved useful for partners to understand the context, purpose and programme for the work. All partners have indicated a willingness to participate in the work.

7. The Environment Agency, Natural England and Solent Transport have all assisted with technical aspects of the potential SDOA identification work and the tender brief for potential SDOA assessments. Solent Transport has also provided a significant input to the content of the tender brief for transport impact assessment and modelling work.
8. The consultant Project Manager has also now met all the PfSH constituent local planning authorities to discuss the context for the work and to understand the interrelationships with local plan work, including timetables. All local planning authorities are agreed that the new Joint Strategy is the most appropriate way to address the housing shortfall and help meet the Duty to Cooperate.

NEXT STEPS

9. The procurement of the potential SDOA comparative assessment study and the transport impact assessment and modelling work will commence shortly with appointments expected in March. Once the POG has considered the report on the existing employment evidence base, a tender brief will be prepared to commission the economic, employment and commercial needs (including logistics) study.
10. It is intended that the draft framework for the SoCG will be updated to become a formal SoCG. A detailed timetable for the work leading to a new Joint Strategy will be added, as will further detail on the development of the evidence base. Other amendments to the text are likely to be considered at the same time.

RECOMMENDATION

It is RECOMMENDED that the Joint Committee NOTES the progress made on the Statement of Common Ground set out in this report.

Background Papers: None

Reference Papers: Draft Framework for PfSH Statement of Common Ground report to PfSH Joint Committee 14 October 2019

Enquiries:

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