



Report to the Partnership for South Hampshire Joint Committee

Date: 07 July 2020

Report of: Paddy May, PfSH Coordinator

Subject: SOUTHERN POLICY CENTRE, A STRATEGY FOR THE CENTRAL SOUTH?

SUMMARY

The Joint Committee are to receive a presentation by Simon Eden, Director, Southern Policy Centre. The Southern Policy Centre has been exploring whether the central South can be seen as a coherent region - and has analysed the published plans and strategies of LEPs and local authorities, asking whether when taken together they articulate a clear strategy for our area.

RECOMMENDATION

It is RECOMMENDED that the Joint Committee NOTES the presentation 'A strategy for the central south?'

BACKGROUND

With a new devolution White Paper likely to be published soon, it seems Ministers will make devolution to our larger cities and regions part of their planning for economic recovery. The Southern Policy Centre has been exploring whether the central South can be seen as a coherent region and has analysed the published plans and strategies of LEPs and local authorities, asking whether when taken together they articulate a clear strategy for our area.

Its study concluded that communities across the central South – from BCP to Portsmouth and towards the north of Hampshire – faced many common opportunities and challenges. There are shared economic priorities, demands for investment in critical infrastructure, and common social and environmental challenges. But the ‘region’ is unlike others, it doesn’t fit easily onto council or LEP boundaries. Its geography varies slightly according to the challenge: transport connectivity, encouraging innovation, economic sector or affordable housing – its boundaries are ‘fuzzy’.

The Centre concluded the focus should be on promoting the region and building cooperation rather than attempting to reorganise existing organisations or their boundaries. The idea we benefit from seeing the central South as a coherent whole is already being adopted by some: it was the subject of a promotional video by Regenerate South, was used as regional ‘branding’ by the public-private consortium that had planned to attend the MIPIM conference and we are aware of it being used in strategy documents being prepared by some local authorities and universities. It has proved flexible and adaptable to the needs of different organisations whilst still conveying a coherent message.

The presentation to PfSH Joint Committee will summarise the findings and give the Joint Committee the opportunity to discuss how best we can promote collaboration and raise our profile with the Government and potential investors.

Background Papers: None

Reference Papers: None

Enquiries:

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