

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Decision Report

Decision Maker:	Executive Member for Policy and Resources
Date:	14 July 2020
Title:	Partnership for South Hampshire Revised Agreement
Report From:	Director of Economy, Transport and Environment

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Purpose of this Report

1. The purpose of this report is to acknowledge the amended membership of the Partnership for South Hampshire Body (PfSH), and approve this change, together with other minor amendments to the joint working arrangements, and to recommend that the Executive Member for Policy and Resources gives authority to enter into a revised joint working agreement, reflecting these changes. The report also recognises the effectiveness, cost savings and environmental benefits of virtual meeting technology and commends its further adoption for sub-regional meetings of bodies such as PfSH.

Recommendations

2. That the Executive Member for Policy and Resources acknowledges and approves the changes to the membership of the Partnership for South Hampshire (PfSH), together with the revised terms of the joint working agreement, as set out in this report.
3. That authority is given to enter into contractual arrangements, in consultation with the Head of Legal Services, to formalise the revised joint working arrangements.
4. That PfSH be advised that the County Council would support further use of virtual meetings for the Joint Committee and other PfSH meetings to reduce the travel and time involved in such gatherings, and support the PfSH ambition of a greener and cleaner future.

Executive Summary

5. This paper seeks to
 - set out the background to the Partnership for South Hampshire (PfSH)

- set out the reasons that a revised joint working agreement is required
- consider the finance for the new working arrangements

Contextual information

6. Hampshire County Council has been a member of the Partnership for Urban South Hampshire (PUSH) since its creation in 2003. PUSH was established to enable joint working between the constituent authorities and in particular, to promote sustainable, economic-led growth and development of South Hampshire supported by enhanced transport and other infrastructure and to lobby and/or influence on all other associated aspects of life within the PUSH area. The County Council has played a significant role within PUSH and latterly PfSH in order to support the principles of sustainable economic development and ensure that the character and environment of southern Hampshire, particularly including the rural areas outside the main towns, are properly considered and protected.
7. A joint committee was established to enable PUSH to achieve its objectives (“the Joint Committee”) and Councillor Grajewski is the County Council’s current representative upon that committee.
8. At its meeting in June 2019, the Joint Committee considered a number of issues around the future arrangements of PUSH. The Joint Committee agreed that:
 - PUSH (now PfSH) should continue with its key objectives, being a clear focus on planning, housing delivery, infrastructure and the contribution to sustainable growth in South Hampshire;
 - the membership of PfSH should reflect the South Hampshire geography;
 - the two National Parks should be invited to join PfSH;
 - the word ‘Urban’ be removed from the Partnership’s title as this no longer reflected the make-up of the authorities within PUSH. It was agreed that the name should be changed to the ‘Partnership for South Hampshire’;
 - the business plan should be amended to reflect the MHCLG housing number methodology; the New Forest Mitigation work that is underway; and that Climate Change should be an additional focus for PfSH;
 - subscriptions should be levied annually to cover core administrative costs with Business Plan project work funded “according to organisation participation”;
 - 5 meetings of the Joint Committee will be scheduled per year;
 - the veto of Hampshire County Council, Portsmouth City Council and Southampton City Council would be maintained; and
 - that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee be consulted on its future arrangements with the view that it should decide the way that it wished to work.
9. The meeting also heard that the New Forest National Park Authority had decided to take up membership of PfSH whilst the South Downs National Park authority felt that with so little of its geography within the South Hampshire area it was not appropriate for them to join.
10. The revised Joint Working Agreement also needs to reflect that the Isle of Wight is no longer a member, having given notice in accordance with the requirements of the joint agreement.

11. The previous Joint Agreement was also a combined Joint Agreement with the Solent Growth Forum Joint Agreement. With the Isle of Wight leaving PfSH the Solent LEP has made alternative arrangements for scrutiny and so there is a need to separate out the two agreements.
12. The proposals detailed here have now been incorporated into a revised Joint Agreement. The revised Joint Agreement was prepared under the direction of the PfSH Monitoring Officer with input by Hampshire County Council officers, and the PfSH Joint Committee approved the draft Agreement at its meeting in December 2019.

Finance

13. Each constituent authority pays towards the core costs of PfSH. The percentage payment remains unchanged. These proportions are shown below:

Authority	%
Southampton City Council*	13.0%
Portsmouth City Council	19.5%
Hampshire County Council	28.2%
Eastleigh Borough Council	6.5%
Fareham Borough Council	6.5%
Gosport Borough Council	4.3%
Havant Borough Council	6.5%
Test Valley Borough Council	2.2%
Winchester City Council	1.1%
East Hampshire District Council	1.1%
New Forest District Council*	10.1%
New Forest National Park Authority	1.0%

14. In addition, authorities may be asked to pay for additional work required to advance or achieve the key objectives of PfSH. These will be on a buy-in basis as the PfSH Joint Committee may from time to time determine.
15. Southampton's proportion reflects that it provides financial and legal support for PfSH, and the New Forest District Council proportion has been increased to reflect that the whole of the Local Authority is now within PfSH.
16. The utilisation of virtual meeting technology during the current pandemic has provided solid evidence of the effectiveness of the technology and the benefits it brings in terms of time and travel savings. This is good for the environment and for work life balance particularly for meetings bringing people from a wide area together and requiring rush hour travel. It is therefore suggested that PfSH could make greater use of this technology to improve effectiveness and reduce the environmental impacts of travel.

Consultation and Equalities

17. Parties to PfSH were engaged via their appointed representative as to the proposed changes to the joint working arrangements. No further consultation is necessary.

Next Steps

18. The revised Joint Agreement is currently circulating amongst the constituent authorities for execution and each authority now needs to satisfy its own governance procedures to enable the Agreement to be entered into. The engrossed Agreement is currently with Gosport Borough Council, having already been executed by Winchester City Council, Portsmouth City Council, New Forest District Council and Test Valley Borough Council. It will be sent to Hampshire County Council for execution shortly.

REQUIRED CORPORATE AND LEGAL INFORMATION:

Links to the Strategic Plan

Hampshire maintains strong and sustainable economic growth and prosperity:	Yes
People in Hampshire live safe, healthy and independent lives:	Yes
People in Hampshire enjoy a rich and diverse environment:	Yes
People in Hampshire enjoy being part of strong, inclusive communities:	Yes

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents

The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)

Document

Location

None

EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT:

1. Equality Duty

The County Council has a duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by or under the Act with regard to the protected characteristics as set out in section 4 of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation);
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic within section 149(7) of the Act (see above) and persons who do not share it.

Due regard in this context involves having due regard in particular to:

- The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant characteristic connected to that characteristic;
- Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic different from the needs of persons who do not share it;
- Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

2. Equalities Impact Assessment:

The decision relates to a joint working agreement procedure and is not expected directly to have a significant impact on groups with protected characteristics. The proposed modifications should benefit all residents in the affected areas, and further activity will be subject to additional assessment as necessary.