
The Hampshire Partnership
Minutes of Meeting
held on
Tuesday, 9th December, 2014

Attendees:

- Karen Brimacombe, Interim Joint Chief Executive, Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council
- Councillor Ian Carr, Leader, Test Valley Borough Council
- Sarah Carter, Skills and Employment Manager, Enterprise M3 LEP
- Councillor Michael Cheshire, Leader, Havant Borough Council
- Councillor Ferris Cowper, Leader, East Hampshire District Council
- Oliver Crosthwaite-Eyre, Chair, New Forest National Park Authority
- Simon Eden, Chief Executive, Winchester City Council
- Geoff French, Chair, Enterprise M3 LEP
- Councillor Connie Hockley, Fareham Borough Council
- Sandy Hopkins, Chief Executive, East Hampshire District and Havant Borough Councils
- Patricia Hughes, Joint Chief Executive, Hart District Council
- Councillor Rob Humby, Leader, Winchester City Council
- Bob Jackson, Finance Director, New Forest District Council
- Tim Jackson, Principal, Sparsholt College
- Major Jodie Kennedy-Smith, Armed Forces
- Richard Jolley, Director of Planning and Development, Fareham Borough Council
- Councillor Peter Langdon, Gosport Borough Council
- Ally Lee-Dudley, Hampshire Voluntary Sector Consortium
- Councillor Simon Letts, Leader, Southampton City Council
- Andrew Lloyd, Chief Executive, Rushmoor Borough Council
- Councillor Keith Mans, Deputy Leader, Hampshire County Council
- Andy Marsh, Chief Constable, Hampshire Constabulary
- Councillor Peter Moyle, Leader, Rushmoor Borough Council
- Cllr Cathy Osselton, Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council
- Councillor Stephen Parker, Hart District Council
- Alex Parmley, Corporate Director, Eastleigh Borough Council
- Councillor Roy Perry, Leader, Hampshire County Council
- Councillor Clive Sanders, Leader, Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council
- Kathy Slack, Director, Enterprise M3 LEP
- Andrew Smith, Chief Executive, Hampshire County Council
- Councillor Royston Smith, Chairman, Hampshire Fire & Rescue Authority
- Professor Elizabeth Stuart, Deputy Vice Chancellor, University of Winchester
- Laura Taylor, Interim Joint Chief Executive, Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council
- Philip Walker, Head of Hampshire Futures, Hampshire County Council
- Councillor Anne Winstanley, Hampshire Association of Local Councils

Apologies

Apologies were received from:

- Alison Barnes, Chief Executive, New Forest National Park Authority
- Dawn Baxendale, Chief Executive, Southampton City Council
- John Bonney, Chief Officer, Hampshire Fire & Rescue Service
- Councillor Trevor Cartwright, Fareham Borough Council
- Tim Colman, Federation of Small Businesses (Wessex)
- Cllr Ken Crookes, Hart District Council
- Felicity Cox, NHS England (Wessex Area Team)
- Gary Jeffries, Solent Local Enterprise Partnership
- Councillor Barry Rickman, Leader, New Forest District Council
- Dave Yates, Chief Executive, New Forest District Council

1. **WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS - COUNCILLOR ROY PERRY, LEADER OF HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. **DEVOLUTION DISCUSSION BY THE PARTNERSHIP**

The Chairman introduced a report on Devolution in Hampshire, regarding the opportunity following the Scottish independence referendum for potential devolution of powers from central government to local government in England. It was reported that the County Council had recently agreed two motions, one of which was in support of the existing 'two tier' model of local government in Hampshire, the other calling for devolution of powers, particularly from unelected quangos, and in support of subsidiarity (and therefore devolution to districts and parishes where appropriate).

The Chairman highlighted that recent discussions with the Secretary of State for Communities & Local Government indicated that he would be open to proposals where all parties involved were supportive and could demonstrate they were competent to take powers on. A proposal had been developed for a Solent Unitary Authority, however there were mixed views on this as it would require dividing up a number of district areas. An alternative proposal was for powers to be devolved to the Hampshire area (including the County Council, Isle of Wight, Southampton and Portsmouth City Councils and the districts) without changing authority boundaries. It was noted that a window of opportunity was currently available, however partners would need to act fast to take advantage.

Partners commented that there was an opportunity to create a new model of devolution which would not require creating a new tier of government. It was noted that the major political parties appeared to support empowering local areas to promote economic growth, therefore there was likely to be willingness to devolve powers in this area e.g. around the skills agenda. Infrastructure was another area where there was interest in Hampshire authorities taking greater ownership for their area.

It was noted that the Solent proposal had been discussed at a recent meeting of the Partnership for Urban South Hampshire (PUSH). There had been a variety of views on the proposal, however there was consensus to seize the opportunity to explore the potential for devolution further. An additional meeting of the Partnership for Urban South Hampshire (PUSH) had been convened in January 2015 in order to discuss the issue further. Further discussions needed to take place to develop what powers would be sought and why, and what it was hoped to achieve by doing so. It was commented that the 'metro mayor' model being proposed for northern city regions may not be appropriate for Hampshire. It was suggested that more than one proposal could be discussed with central government.

A number of District Council representatives commented that they were supportive of retaining current local government arrangements while working closely together, and were concerned about the impact of a proposal that would split their district area in two. Another partner welcomed the opportunity to review 'who does what' in delivery of public services, to consider what was best done at national level, county level and district level. It was noted having sufficient critical mass in order to deliver services was important in the current financial climate.

The Chairman highlighted that a meeting had been convened in early January with Network Rail and Southwest Trains, regarding investment in the rail network in the South, which was a practical step towards infrastructure investment that would support economic growth.

It was concluded that further discussions would be held, to seek to take advantage of the opportunity presented, and further define proposals for devolution in Hampshire.

3. **SKILLS AND EMPLOYMENT IN HAMPSHIRE**

Andrew Lloyd, Chief Executive of Rushmoor Borough Council, introduced the workshop on skills and employment in Hampshire, the content of which had been developed following a discussion at a previous meeting of the Partnership in September 2014.

Kathy Slack, Director of the M3 Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) gave a presentation to set the scene. It was noted that the presentation included data from both the M3 LEP and the Solent LEP, and had been produced using data provided by the Hampshire County Council research and intelligence team.

Following the presentation, members of the Hampshire Partnership were divided into four discussion groups, facilitated by: Professor Elizabeth Stuart from University of Winchester, Tim Jackson from Sparsholt College, Major Jodie Kennedy-Smith and Kathy Slack from the M3 LEP. The groups were invited to discuss what they had heard, what role there may be for the Hampshire Partnership in the skills agenda, and what their priorities for action were.

Following the discussions, the groups were invited to feed back their key points:

- that there was an issue regarding whether Further Education colleges were delivering the skills the local economy needs, which was affected by the choices and motivations of young people
- careers advice and guidance for young people (and older people seeking to change career) was important
- the university route was often perceived to be of higher value than apprenticeships – this attitude needs to shift as some people were better suited to the apprenticeship route
- many businesses in Hampshire are small or self employed individuals, which means they are ‘time poor’ in terms of being able to release staff for training. The training offer was currently not flexible enough to meet the needs of these people
- The presentation highlighted that there is a lot of work going on in this arena already, however there is a potential gap in co-ordination between schemes and facilitating links between the parties involved
- Members picked up on the slide from the presentation which highlighted the number of agencies offering career guidance initiatives. It was suggested there was a potential role for the Partnership to consider how these schemes worked as a whole, to ensure public funds were not duplicating effort
- The group looking at forces personnel leaving the forces and seeking civilian employment noted there were opportunities to support forces personnel e.g. reservists mentoring standing army personnel. A barrier to forces personnel remaining in Hampshire may be affordability of housing

Andrew Lloyd summarised the themes which had emerged:

- The importance of appropriate advice and guidance on skills and employment options
- apprenticeships are undervalued
- There is a lot going on supporting skills and employment but it could be better coordinated, facilitating a joined up approach between the bodies involved (noting schemes exist across the public sector and private sector)

Priority areas where tangible actions could be taken were suggested as follows:

- Opportunity to pool resources and share good practice
- Using technology effectively e.g. making applying for apprenticeships easier
- Making greater use of the Chamber of Commerce e.g. to help give credibility to the apprenticeships route as they have a good reputation and can reach small businesses
- Use technology to reach ‘time poor’ learners e.g. courses that can be accessed remotely such as the Open University
- Role for the Partnership to facilitate a strategic conversation between schools, colleges, employers and universities, to identify skills needs in Hampshire and how to meet them

Andrew Lloyd thanked the facilitators. It was concluded that themes had emerged from the discussions, which could be built upon to take this work forwards.

The Chairman indicated that the discussion from the workshop would be written up, and an item would be brought back to a future meeting of the partnership to decide what action to take as a result. There appeared to be a role for the partnership to provide a co-ordinating role.

4. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

None.

5. **CLOSING REMARKS - COUNCILLOR ROY PERRY**

None.

6. **FUTURE MEETINGS OF THE HAMPSHIRE PARTNERSHIP**

It was noted that the next meeting of The Hampshire Partnership would be held on Wednesday 4 March 2015 commencing at 10.30am in Ashburton Hall, Elizabeth II Court (Podium Level), Hampshire County Council, Winchester.

Future dates:

24 June 2015

1 October 2015

9 December 2015

29 February 2016