

South East England Leaders' Board**Friday 24 July 2009****Present:**

John Gilbey	Canterbury City Council
Ian Lake	Surrey County Council
Ayas Fallon-Khan	Brighton and Hove City Council
Elizabeth Cartwright	East Hampshire District Council
Tony Page	Reading Council
Mike Appleyard	Buckinghamshire County Council
Cec Tallack	Milton Keynes Council
Paul Carter	Kent County Council
Tony Reid	East Sussex County Council
Jonathan Glen (for Ken Thornber)	Hampshire County Council
George Beckett	Winchester City Council
Gordon Keymer	Tandridge Council
Ian Hudspeth	Oxfordshire County Council
Moira Gibson	Surrey Heath Borough Council
John Furey	Runnymede Council
David Tutt	Eastbourne Borough Council

Background

This special meeting of the SEEC Executive – the Leaders' Board – was arranged after the SEEC AGM on 24 July when confusion arose regarding the reporting lines from the Delivery Boards. The “wiring diagram” indicated that the Delivery Boards reported to the Strategy Board, but at the AGM it appeared that some decisions were referred to the appropriate Secretary of State without referral to the Strategy Board in the first instance. Leaders who attended the AGM sought reassurance that decisions reached by the Delivery Boards would be approved by the Strategy Board first and that members would be able to play a greater role in agenda setting.

Terms of Reference for the Delivery Boards

- A background briefing paper on the Delivery Boards was circulated.
- PC stated that the Strategy Board must be able to give its views on the recommendations emanating from the Delivery Boards, and as such the Strategy Board could help to strengthen decision-making. The Strategy Board needed to look at the Forward Plan and be given an opportunity to vary recommendations coming from the Delivery Boards before they went to the Secretary of State.
- PC called for the Working Group to report to the SEEC Executive first then the Partnership Board. He stated that the Leaders' Board wanted to see the Terms of Reference before they went to the Partnership Board. It was agreed that the Working Group should also have one of the proposed members of the Economic Development and Skills Board.
- Agreed that all Delivery Boards would elect vice-chairmen at their first meetings.
- It was agreed not to amend the Terms of Reference, subject to a review in a year's time.

Scrutiny and monitoring role for the Leaders' Board, Strategy Board and Delivery Boards

The role of scrutiny and monitoring could be measured by looking back after a year to see what influence Members had exerted over the Forward Plan.

It was agreed that the Housing and Regeneration Board should play a key role in monitoring the expenditure of the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) and other agencies to ensure this met the objectives of SEEC and the South East Plan. This would also need to be monitored closely by the Strategy Board. There also needed to be greater flexibility built within the agencies' activities to deliver the appropriate number of homes as the South East Plan was out of date with the current economic climate.

Economic Development and Skills Board

- Members agreed that they wanted six local authority members representing sub-regions. SEEDA would chair. The governance arrangements had not been finalised or agreed.
- Need confirmation that the six local authority Members who were originally elected to sit on the Economic Development and Skills Board would actually do so once membership was agreed.
- Martin Tugwell advised that the Working Group had more work to do to develop the Terms of Reference for the Economic Development and Skills Board as well as resolve the potential overlap between this Board and the Housing and Regeneration Board on regeneration.

The role of Regeneration

Clarification was sought on the role of Regeneration as this was covered in particular by both the Housing and Regeneration Board and the Economic Development and Skills Board. It was agreed to raise this at the Partnership Board meeting later on the same day.

Future SEEC activity

SEEC agreed to hold two conferences a year – one on Housing and measures to support the recovery of the Housing Market (including housebuilders, shadow and government ministers, Registered Social Landlords) and the second on the devolution agenda.

IESE report

- More information needed, including the size of the budget and the influence elected Members could have over the budget.
- Paul Carter to speak to Paul Bettison.

Local Government Association (LGA)

- PC to send a copy of his letter to Margaret Eaton and John Raynsford regarding LGA representation to Leaders' Board Members (*Action: Paul Watkins*)

Members' Allowances

- A paper outlining the various options to be submitted to the next Leaders' Board (*Action: Diana Pogson*).

Inter-Regional Forum

PC recommended that the 8 members of the Leaders' Board who sat on the Partnership Board should also sit on the Inter-Regional Forum (IRF). Diana Pogson stated that there were only 5 places on the IRF. PC confirmed that GOSE funding for SEERA Ltd covered the activities of the IRF. There was also a sum in the SEERA Ltd reserves that could be used by SEEC to commission research.

ACTIONS:

1. The Leaders' Board meetings need to be timed before the various meetings of the Regional Transport, Housing and Regeneration and Economic Development and Skills Boards. These meetings would also be used to review the items coming up on the Forward Plan before it went to the Partnership Board (*Action: Jenny Whittle to confirm with Irene Cripps*).
2. SEEC Members to be circulated a list of meeting dates and items coming forward (*Action: Jenny Whittle*)
3. PC to speak with Paul Bettison regarding more information about IESE (*Action: Paul Carter*)
4. Leaders' Board members to be circulated a copy of the LGA representation letter from PC to Margaret Eaton and John Raynsford (*Action: Paul Watkins*)
5. Members' Allowances paper to be revised for next Leaders' Board meeting (*Action: Diana Pogson*)

END