

SOUTH EAST ENGLAND COUNCILS' EXECUTIVE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING ON 22 JANUARY 2010

Present: Paul Carter (Chairman)
 Paul Watkins (Secretary)
 Mike Appleyard
 Mary Ballin
 George Beckett
 Paul Bettison
 Elizabeth Cartwright
 Tony de Vere
 Moira Gibson
 Ian Hudspeth
 Mary Mears
 Tony Page
 Andrew Povey
 Tony Reid
 David Robertson
 Henry Smith
 Cec Tallack
 David Tutt

In Attendance: Chris Williams, Chairman of the LACE Group
 Aidan Shutter, Policy Officer, SEEC
 Diana Pogson, Interim Managing Director, Partnership Board
 Catriona Riddell, Director of Planning, Partnership Board
 Martin Tugwell, Director of Regional Investment, Partnership Board/SEEDA
 Irene Cripps, PA to Diana Pogson, Partnership Board

Apologies and Declarations of Substitutes

1. Apologies were received from Louise Bloom, John Furey, Gordon Keymer CBE, Ken Thornber CBE and Ed Turner.
2. Paul Bettison substituted for Gordon Keymer.

B1. Minutes of SEEC Executive Meeting on 16 October 2009 and Matters Arising Not Elsewhere on the Agenda

B1.1 The minutes were **agreed and signed** as a true record of the meeting.

B1.2 Minute B1.2 - Business Plan and Proposal to the LGA

Chris Williams **advised** that David Shakespeare and David Parsons had been invited to address the forthcoming SEEC plenary, and that he would have a pre-meet with David Shakespeare.

B1.3 Minute B5.1 - SEEC Budget and Membership Update

- a) George Beckett **advised** that he had contacted Gosport BC; not committing to joining SEEC had been an oversight and the invitation should be resent.

- b) Paul Carter **advised** that he had been informed by Medway Council that a decision on joining SEEC was still to be taken.

B2. Potential Future Regional Planning and Economic Development Arrangements - Local Authority Chief Executives (LACE) Discussion Paper

B2.1 Although the need to plan for the future was recognised, it was suggested that it would be better to defer a detailed discussion until after the Conservative Party had published its Green Paper on planning.

B2.2 Points raised during the discussion were:

- The importance of retaining the South East England Councils, even if the Leaders' Board is disbanded.
- The need for a minimalistic structure, while retaining the expertise held within the staff of SEERA Ltd.
- In respect of delivery issues, the governance arrangements that exist via the 'delivery boards' has enabled the South East to achieve influence over decision making within Whitehall. The accountability provided by member-led structures means that decisions have been devolved bringing the ability to react more flexibly.
- Consideration needs to be given to what happens in the interim if a new Government is elected and promotes legislation to replace the existing planning arrangements.
- It was believed that the opportunity exists to develop a proposal that meets the needs of local authorities in the South East. However there is a need to develop this quickly if it is to succeed.
- Although funding for the first half of the financial year 2010-11 has been guaranteed by CLG, the position is unclear in respect of the second half; the claim for the first half year's funding should therefore be as large as possible.
- In developing a proposal for the South East, it is important that it reflects the potential of SEEC to act as the voice of local government.
- SEEC wants to retain an agenda wider than planning and therefore needs to work with senior managers in SEERA Ltd on staffing implications and what it would mean if SEEC takes over the funding of SEERA Ltd should CLG funding be reduced or cut entirely.

B2.3 It was **agreed** that deferring this to the next meeting of the SEEC Executive would be too late and it should therefore be discussed at the SEEC plenary meeting on 26 February 2010.

- B2.4 It was **noted** that not all members had received notification that the next SEEC plenary had been rescheduled from 5 March to 26 February; details will be circulated.

(**Post-meeting note:** the plenary meeting has been rescheduled to 25 March 2010.)

B3. Migration Issues: Update on Financial Implications

- B3.1 The report was **received and noted**.

B4. European Issues

- B4.1 Paul Watkins **advised** that a meeting with GOSE and SEEDA to discuss these issues would be taking place that afternoon.

B5. London Plan Update

- B5.1 The report was **received and noted**. It was **agreed** to delegate SEEC's response to the draft replacement London Plan to the Chairman, with input from the Partnership Board's Director of Planning.

B6. Plenary Meeting: Draft Minutes of Meeting on 4 December 2009

- B6.1 The draft minutes were **received and noted**.

B7. Star Chamber Workshops: Update

- B7.1 The Executive were reminded, by email following the meeting, that a workshop on "Regional Strategy - Challenges for the South East" will be held on 11 February at Lingfield Park Racecourse, Lingfield, Surrey and on 23 February at Reading Town Hall and were asked to confirm as soon as possible which they wanted to attend.

C. General

C1. Forward Meeting Dates

- C1.1 June dates to be canvassed for the next meeting.

C2. Any Other Business

- C2.1 Future Arrangements for Leaders' Board - Proposed Addition to Membership of the Leaders' Board
(Agenda Item A8c from the preceding Leaders' Board meeting)

- i) Chris Williams reminded members that SEEC's business plan identified that SEEC should have greater influence over the direction and membership of IESE. He **advised** that this has been achieved by SEEC's Chairman becoming a member of IESE and that as a consequence Paul Bettison, Chairman of IESE, believes he should have a place on SEEC's Executive.

- ii) The Chairman **advised** that he and Paul Watkins had discussed this with Paul Bettison, but had agreed nothing as it is for the Executive to decide which 'other bodies' should be invited to nominate representatives to SEEC's Executive. This raised the issue of which, if any, extra 'other bodies' should be invited without making the Executive too large.

- iii) It was **agreed** not to invite Paul Bettison to become a member of the Executive, and how to influence the work of IESE would have to be resolved in another way.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 13.40.