

18<sup>th</sup> August 2010

## TO LOCAL AUTHORITY LEADERS AND CHIEF EXECUTIVES

Dear Colleague,

### **Consultation of the draft South East Skills Priorities Statement for 2011/12**

I am writing to alert you to the publication of the draft SE Skills Priorities Statement for 2011/12 academic year and invite your comment.

SEEDA and the other RDAs were originally asked to prepare Skills Priorities Statements by the Labour Government, to influence SFA funding allocations. Although the Coalition government's policy is to remove targets so that colleges and other providers can respond directly to business and individuals' needs, the government has asked RDAs to continue to work on this skills evidence and analysis for each region. BIS officials will use the analysis to advise Ministers on priorities for skills investment post-Comprehensive Spending Review, and expect colleges and other providers to reflect the analysis and priorities in their own business plans.

The aim of the South East Statement is to provide a South-East wide overview of the skills required to support the globally competitive characteristics of the SE's reviving economy, to analyse the skills which will lead to more and better jobs in both existing and new industries. It also sets out the skills priorities that require attention and response from providers and stakeholders.

We are aware that a number of LEP proposals in development across the South East will feature skills as a key driver for economic development and growth. We do hope that the draft Skills Priorities Statement for 2011/12 will prove useful in informing LEP proposals and policy development, and might help to provide a framework to discuss skills needs and priorities for stakeholders, skills providers, funding agencies, advisers and employers.

The Statement has been drawn together using a combination of quantitative data analysis and interpretation and qualitative evidence, including from discussions with a wide range of organisations and business representatives. The final Statement will be published in mid September, underpinned by a detailed evidence base.

We have had to move fast to produce these to BIS's timetable so only have a limited period of time for engagement and consultation, but would welcome your comments on the high level regional summary set out in the Statement, and especially on the following:

1. How well does the Statement provide Local Authorities in partnership with business with the intelligence you need to help identify skills issues and priorities? What else would you need to support your discussions?
2. How might local authorities and their partners use the Statement to impact the alignment of skills provision with the skills needed for economic development?
3. How can SEEDA further support the development of skills and employment aspects of LEP proposals and plans?

The consultation concludes on 10<sup>th</sup> September. Please submit your comments to Martin Hannaford at [martinhannaford@seeda.co.uk](mailto:martinhannaford@seeda.co.uk)

Thank you for your time in responding,

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Oona Muirhead', enclosed within a hand-drawn oval shape.

Oona Muirhead  
Group Executive Director Strategy & Resources