

**SOUTH EAST ENGLAND COUNCILS
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING**

Date: 11 July 2012

Subject: **Future meeting dates and topics for debate**

Report of: Cllr Gordon Keymer CBE, SEEC Chairman



Recommendations:

- i) Members consider the frequency of SEEC meetings for 2013 and endorse cancellation of the SEEC Executive Committee on 11 December 2012
- iii) Members agree to remove SEEC's Europe Task & Finish group in favour of including EU issues/funding as regular items on mainstream SEEC agendas
- iii) Members put forward suggestions for speakers and topics relevant to SEEC priorities for inclusion in future meetings.

1. Meeting schedule

- 1.1 In the current calendar year SEEC has scheduled seven main member meetings:
 - 3 All-Member meetings (February, June, November 2012)
 - 4 Executive Committee meetings (March, July, September, December 2012).
- 1.2 Following initial discussions on closer working between SEEC and South East Strategic Leaders (SESL) in September 2011 the two organisations, along with the District Leaders' Group, now co-ordinate 3 All-member meetings on the same day and in the same venue. This reduces pressure on leaders' diaries by concentrating several meetings in a single day and offers some cost savings. The normal sequence of meetings for the 3 All-member meeting a year is now:
 - Morning: Simultaneous but separate meetings of SESL and District Leaders
 - Lunchtime: Political group meetings
 - Afternoon: SEEC All-members' meeting.
- 1.3 As SEEC and SESL begin to plan meeting dates for January-December 2013, I want to invite SEEC member views on the regular meeting schedule and whether a reduced SEEC programme should be put forward for 2013, for example 2 All-member meetings and 2-3 Executive Committees.
- 1.4 Also, as a short term measure, I am asking members to support cancellation of the SEEC Executive currently scheduled for 11 December 2012. The SEEC Executive on 11 September and All-member meeting on 8 November will continue as planned.
- 1.5 If there is SEEC support for reducing All-member meetings, I will ask SESL and the District Leaders whether they would also consider moving to two meetings a year. While reducing SEEC's All-member meetings has potential to limit the call on members' time and deliver some cost savings, benefits would be significantly less if other parties wish to continue with a fuller meeting programme.
- 1.6 Wherever possible additional member workshops, conferences or ad hoc meetings will be scheduled on existing meeting dates. However, where this cannot be achieved there is likely to remain a need for a small number of additional dates.

2. Europe Task & Finish Group

- 2.1 Following a question at SEEC's AGM as to how long the Europe Task and Finish Group would continue, I have reviewed the situation. Bearing in mind the increasing importance of European issues, particularly funding, I ask members to agree to cease the Europe Task and Finish Group and make European issues a regular item in mainstream SEEC meetings.

3. Key topics for discussion

- 3.1 At the SEEC AGM I highlighted the importance I place on making SEEC responsive to members' interests. I would warmly welcome your suggestions for discussion topics and speakers for future agendas over the coming year.
- 3.2 Members have already been asked to comment on the proposed 3 year vision and business plan (agenda item 8). However, as the year progresses I encourage members to put forward suggestions for related topics that would benefit from discussion at SEEC and ideas for relevant external speakers who could be invited to address members. In the first instance please email suggestions to myself and SEEC Director Heather Bolton heatherbolton@secouncils.gov.uk to ensure we can take your views into account in agenda planning.