

# South East England Councils



## About us

South East England Councils (SEEC) was established in April 2009 to represent and promote the views and interests of the 74 local authorities in the South East.

With members representing all tiers of local authorities and all three main political parties, SEEC carries a unique mandate as the single democratic voice of the South East. SEEC is a voluntary body funded by member council subscriptions.

## SEEC's key principles

SEEC has a wide remit, which includes effective representation of local authority interests on issues affecting South East councils. SEEC works to four principles:

### 1. Strive for a fair funding deal for the South East

Making the case for fairer national funding settlements for South East local authorities and maximising councils' access to EU funding opportunities.

### 2. Promote the South East's position as a leading global economy

Making the case for strategic infrastructure and investment needs to maintain the South East's international competitiveness, including joint working with business.

### 3. Act as single democratic voice for South East interests

Representing all tier and cross-boundary views to Government, maintaining dialogue with neighbouring areas, and representing South East local government interests on external bodies.

### 4. Monitor the pulse of the South East

Tracking data to illustrate South East successes and pressure points in delivering effective local services and supporting economic growth. This will include a focus on areas such as public finance, housing & infrastructure, economic trends and impact of migration.

## SEEC work priorities

SEEC will focus its work in the following areas:

- **Finance** – a fair funding deal for South East local authorities.
- **Economy** – the case for investing in the South East and encouraging joint work with LEPs on strategic infrastructure.
- **Housing** – delivering through localism and community planning.
- **Migration** – impact of migration on local services.
- **Europe** – raising awareness of EU funding opportunities for South East councils.
- **Transport** – making the case for major South East transport projects that will support UK-wide economic growth.

The Chairman of SEEC is Cllr Gordon Keymer CBE, Leader of Tandridge District Council. Deputy Chairman is Cllr David Hodge, Leader of Surrey County Council and SEEC's Secretary is Cllr Paul Watkins, Leader of Dover District Council.

For further information visit [www.secouncils.gov.uk](http://www.secouncils.gov.uk)

## Why join SEEC?

Membership of SEEC is only open to district, county and unitary councils to ensure we focus wholly on our responsibilities as directly-elected representatives for the 8.2million people living in the South East.

SEEC members believe it is vital to make a strong and united case for the South East. As a member-led organisation, our voice carries greater weight the more democratically-elected councils we represent.

Members believe South East local authorities need a strong collective voice to ensure we are heard – and the needs of the South East recognised – in Westminster and Whitehall.

Investment and support for the South East is under threat, so we must work together to challenge the misconceptions that are currently leading to underfunding of our services and infrastructure. SEEC work in the past year on deprivation, public sector employment and local government finance provides strong evidence to help us make the case to Government for a fairer funding deal for the South East.

Also, as localism changes the way we all work, it will be important for democratically-elected councillors to have a single voice to feedback successes and concerns on behalf of district, county and unitary councils.

A single voice for the South East's democratically-elected local government is important because SEEC members:

- Know the South East's needs better than anyone else.
- Have more local authorities and residents than any other area of England. We represent the interests of 74 local authorities and 8.2 million residents to avoid lagging behind other areas when bidding for funding and infrastructure investment.
- Can make an informed case for investment and policy that will support our role as the powerhouse of the UK economy. The Treasury gains more in net tax from the South East than from any other area – our priority is to see a fair share of that public money re-invested in our continued success.

## Value for money subscriptions

SEEC is a member-led organisation. We keep subscriptions low by capping staffing levels and minimising bureaucracy. We follow templates to ensure fair representation on committees for all political parties with more than 5% of South East councillors.

SEEC's All-member meetings and Executive Committees are held in public. As a member of SEEC each council is entitled to:

- An allocated place, speaking and voting rights at SEEC All-member meetings.
- Voting rights to decide SEEC office holders, including Chairman and members of the SEEC Executive Committee.
- The opportunity to stand for election as a SEEC office holder, Executive member or to be nominated for a specialist SEEC working group.
- The opportunity to be nominated as a SEEC representative on a variety of external organisations.
- Invitations to attend SEEC events and reduced rates for any fee-paying events.
- Access to member-only sections of SEEC's Data Dashboard giving detailed information on a range of issues affecting local authorities.
- Regular SEEC newsletters giving feedback on meetings and activities.
- Suggest agenda items for future SEEC meetings.
- Access all SEEC meeting papers and minutes via [www.secouncils.gov.uk](http://www.secouncils.gov.uk).