

SOUTH EAST ENGLAND LEADERS' BOARD/ SOUTH EAST ENGLAND COUNCILS' EXECUTIVE

Date: 22 January 2010

Subject: **The Future of South East Excellence**

Report of: Catriona Riddell, Director of Planning, Partnership Board

1. Introduction

1.1 As part of the current restructuring within SEEDA and the focus on business support, innovation and enterprise, a number of areas previously supported will no longer be. One of these areas is the South East Excellence (SEE) programme and related activities will cease to be funded beyond March 2010. SEE has played an important role over the past five years in raising the quality of development in the region, improving and sharing skills and expertise, and providing access to information, particularly via the website (www.southeastexcellence.co.uk) - see Annex A for background information.

1.2 The Partnership Board has already agreed to take on responsibility for the SEE website and will be developing this to, amongst other things, provide a useful resource of information and support to local authorities for LDF preparation. However, there are a number of other strands of SEE's work that the Leaders' Board will have an interest in and are related to:

- addressing the barriers to delivery, particularly by bringing the private and public sector together;
- improving the quality and sustainability of future development in the region;
- ensuring that development is properly supported by the right type of infrastructure;
- making best use of scarce resources and skills.

1.3 The Advisory Board which steers the work of SEE and includes key members of the development industry (see Annex B) will meet for the last time this month. However, they are keen to both ensure that the important work of SEE continues in some form and to help strengthen the links between the political leadership within the region and leaders from within the development industry. Members of the Advisory Board have therefore been invited to this meeting of the Leaders' Board to discuss what the common agenda is and future working relationships.

2. Recommendation

The Leaders' Board is asked to consider:

- (a) whether there is an appetite amongst the political leaders to work at a regional level with the development industry, building on the relationships already established through SEE;
- (b) what the common agenda might be; and
- (c) how best to take this forward.