

**SOUTH EAST ENGLAND COUNCILS
ALL-MEMBER MEETING**



Date: 7 February 2013

Subject: Strategic transport investment priorities for economic growth

Report by: Heather Bolton, SEEC Director

Recommendations:

Members are asked to:

- i) Debate the draft strategic transport investment report from the South East Directors of Environment, Economy, Planning and Transport (SEDEPT)
- ii) Contribute views on the proposed transport schemes and any additional or alternative projects that would support significant economic growth
- iii) Agree next steps towards finalising and endorsing the report before presenting the investment case to ministers.

1. Introduction

1.1 Last year SEEC commissioned the South East Directors of Environment, Economy, Planning and Transport (SEDEPT) to prepare a report highlighting strategic transport investment projects in the South East which will support national economic growth.

1.2 Trevor Pugh, Surrey CC Strategic Director for Environment and Infrastructure, will present SEDEPT's recommendations in the form of a draft report (attached as Annex 1). This is an opportunity for SEEC members to consider the recommendations and SEEC's role in making the case to ministers for an investment programme that will benefit both the South East and the national economy.

2. Report principles

2.1 The report outlines proposals for investment in a small number of major South East transport infrastructure projects that will deliver benefits for the wider national economy. Key principles underpinning proposals in the report include:

- The role of the South East as the economic powerhouse of the UK, and the excellent return on investment that South East infrastructure improvements offer.
- The importance of South East infrastructure – roads, rail, ports, airports – in providing a gateway to the rest of the world for UK-wide and international trade & tourism.
- The importance of strategic corridors providing business and commuting links between key economic areas of the UK, including commuting links to London.
- The need to reduce congestion and the environmental impact of travel.
- A focus on major, strategic and cross-boundary schemes with national impact, which are outside the funding reach of individual local authorities/ Local Transport Bodies (LTBs) or groups of authorities/ LTBs.

3. Next steps

- 3.1 SEEC members' feedback is important in refining the final report. The report also presents an excellent opportunity for joint working across the South East to raise the profile of our investment needs and the national economic benefits on offer.
- 3.2 Members are asked to support the following steps towards agreeing a final report:
- Proposing the report is endorsed jointly by SEEC and SESL
 - Approaching Local Enterprise Partnerships for their comments and input with a view to joint endorsement of the report wherever possible
 - A short consultation period for all SEEC member councils and partners to submit views on the draft proposals and projects.
- 3.3 A final report supported by SEEC, SESL and LEPs has potential to be a powerful tool in influencing Government's future national transport infrastructure investment strategy.