

**MINUTES OF THE EXECUTIVE MEETING****Thursday 25 September 2014**The Institute of Materials, Minerals and Mining  
1 Carlton House Terrace, London SW1Y 5DB

**Present:** Nicolas Heslop (meeting chairman)  
Paul Bettison  
David Burbage MBE  
Paul Carter CBE  
Van Coulter  
Myles Cullen  
Roland Dibbs  
John Furey  
Ian Hudspeth  
Tony Page  
Carole Paternoster  
Roy Perry  
Bob Standley  
Martin Tett

**In Attendance:** Chris Williams, Buckinghamshire CC  
Heather Bolton, SEEC  
Nick Woolfenden, SEEC  
Nathan Roach, SEEC / SESL  
Philippa Mellish, SESL  
Mona Sehgal, LGA  
Kat Hanna, London Chamber of Commerce and Industry  
Silviya Barrett, London Chamber of Commerce and Industry

This meeting followed a joint SEEC-SESL session which covered agenda items 1-2, [note here](#).

**3. Apologies, declarations of substitutes and declarations of interest**

3.1 Apologies were received from Andrew Bowles, John Burden, Ken Crookes, Gordon Keymer CBE, Gill Mattock, David Neighbour. John Furey substituted for David Hodge. No declarations of interest were made.

3.2 The Executive Committee recorded condolences on the death in September of SEEC member Cllr Ann Ducker, leader of South Oxfordshire DC.

**4. Minutes of SEEC Executive on 4 April 2014 and matters arising**

4.1 The minutes were agreed. The chair reported a small group of members will meet Transport Minister Baroness Kramer in November to discuss *Mind the Gap*.

4.2 Cllr John Furey said repair grants for flooding had deadlines this week but some residents were still unable to obtain repair cost estimates. He has written to Defra and CLG for an extension. Other councils may wish to do the same.

**5. Skills for economic success: A business perspective on South East needs**

5.1 Kat Hanna, London Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI), outlined a forthcoming report to assess and make recommendations on construction skills shortages in London and the South East. It includes research based on three sets of data: Barbour ABI on the pipeline of building projects for the next 4 years, Construction Industry Training Board (CITB) forecasting of labour required, and Skills Funding Agency data on current skills provision. Barbour's South East area does not include Hampshire.

5.2 Silviya Barrett (LCCI) presented figures showing significant demand for labour over the 4 years, especially in housing, and a peak in 2015 will bring serious skills shortages.

- 5.3 Members said LCCI figures underestimate future demand, which will continue to increase after 2015 as projects such as HS2 rail, airport expansion and London's 49,000 homes a year go live. Data also excludes demand from the property maintenance sector, and a £1bn capital programme planned by Hampshire CC.
- 5.4 Members are unclear how the Skills Funding Agency and CITB are addressing skills shortages. Businesses that fund CITB need to ensure it better matches their needs. Devolution of skills funding and commissioning to councils would align skills to local needs, with courses tailored to employer demand rather than student preferences.
- 5.5 Members are also concerned about proposals to fund skills training with S106 money. This is not effective use of public funds when businesses and Government are already funding CITB. Residents expect to see S106 spent on locally-determined priorities, and there is already insufficient money to meet expectations. Also, use of S106 for training comes too late; earlier intervention is needed to deliver skills before projects start.
- 5.6 Members identified three areas for possible case studies including: the demand created by capital investment programmes; requirements that a proportion of workers be drawn from local regeneration areas; and the impact of University Technical Colleges.  
**ACTION 1: SEEC to inform the report by writing to LCCI setting out points raised by members in the meeting and suggesting mini case studies for inclusion in the report.**
- 6. SEEC workshop on Duty to Co-operate – 28 November 2014**
- 6.1 On 28 November 2014, SEEC is holding a free workshop for member councils on the building blocks for successful local plans, including meeting duty to co-operate. Nick Woolfenden outlined plans for the event, inviting views. Members stressed the importance of both political and officer views on how to meet the duty to co-operate.  
**ACTION 2: Members to suggest any additional speakers or topics and contribute examples of local practice to inform a case study session on 28 November.**
- 7. London's future plans: Impact on the South East**
- 7a South East representations on housing and planning to the London Plan EIP**
- 7a.1 SEEC was represented at the London Plan Examination in Public in September, and made the case for London to meet its own housing needs. However, several London councils and development companies argued that some London need should be met in the South East. SEEC circulated an update to members & MPs to restate its position.  
**ACTION 3: SEEC to share any responses from MPs with Executive members.**  
**ACTION 4: SEEC to update members when the EIP reports at the end of 2014.**
- 7b Draft consultation response to London's *Infrastructure 2050* proposals**
- 7b.1 The Mayor is consulting on *Infrastructure 2050*, which covers issues including housing and transport. It argues London should look outside its boundaries to meet housing needs, including in the South East. Members agreed SEEC should respond saying:
- The Mayor should do all he can to meet London's housing needs in its boundaries
  - Infrastructure investment is needed in the South East *as well as* London
  - Financial powers and freedoms should be devolved to the SE *as well as* London
  - Engagement is needed between South East Councils and the Mayor.
- ACTION 5: SEEC to invite SESL to submit a joint response to Infrastructure 2050. Sign off for SEEC by the chair, deputy & secretary to meet the 31 October deadline.**
- 7c. Ongoing dialogue with London – options for South East political engagement**
- 7c.1 Heather Bolton outlined a paper from SEEC Chairman Gordon Keymer on proposals for strategic dialogue with London. Members supported establishing a cross-tier task and finish group to consider SEEC's future relationship with London. Reflecting SEEC's political balance, it would comprise 12-13 members, and report to the Executive.

**ACTION 6:** SEEC to email all members requesting nominations for the task and finish group to be submitted by Friday 10 October 2014.

## **8. SEEC Business Plan: Final draft**

8.1 Following an AGM discussion in July, members put forward the following additional proposals for the SEEC business plan:

- task and finish group on political engagement with London (item 7c)
- a discussion with experts on the advantages and disadvantages of fracking
- encouraging collaboration from utilities on emergency response activities
- a session on commercialising council operations—how they can maximise income
- task and finish group to consider next steps in SEEC-SESL working relationship.

8.2 Members felt fracking, emergency response and commercialisation were national issues covered elsewhere (eg at the LGA), so should not be in SEEC's work plan. Engagement with London and the future relationship with SESL should be included.

**ACTION 7:** SEEC business plan to include political engagement with London and consideration of next steps in the working relationship with SESL.

## **9. Verbal updates and items for information**

9.1 Heather Bolton summarised a South East Strategic Partnership for Migration (SESPM) report showing South East net migration rising, due to fewer people leaving the area.

9.2 Modern day slavery legislation is likely to introduce a statutory obligation on council staff to report suspicions of trafficking. SESPM has some Home Office funding to produce a training film on this topic. Members agreed SEEC should co-commission and co-brand a short film, contributing £1,000- £2,000.

**ACTION 8:** SEEC to co-commission a modern day slavery training film with SESPM.

9.3 The SEEC-SESL South East Manifesto, [Let the South East Work for UK](#), was launched on 22 September. Hard copies have been sent to members, ministers and MPs. It is also available on SEEC's website.

## **10. Confirmed forward meeting dates:**

- 12 November 2014 – SEEC Executive 11am
- 5 February 2015 – SEEC All-member meeting
- 19 March 2015 – SEEC Executive: 1.30pm (shared date with SESL)
- 25 June 2015 – SEEC AGM (shared date with SESL)

## **11. Any other business**

11.1 Members agreed to respond to CLG consultation on planning for Gypsies & Travellers.

**ACTION 9:** SEEC to prepare a draft response for the next Executive in November.

11.2 A SEEC nomination to South Central Ambulance Trust Board was requested. Three candidate CVs were presented: Cllr David Burbage (Cons), Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead; Cllr Michael Firmager (Cons), Wokingham BC; and Cllr Bet Tickner (Lab), Reading BC. The Conservative group put forward Cllr Burbage; the Labour group put forward Cllr Tickner. Cllr Burbage was selected by a show of hands.

**ACTION 10:** SEEC to report the nomination of Cllr Burbage to the ambulance trust.

There was no further business and the meeting closed at 15:40pm.

**Signed:**

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**Gordon Keymer, Chairman**

**Date: 12 November 2014**