

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

Date: 6 February 2014

Subject: **SEEC Data Dashboard Spring 2014**

Report by: Nick Woolfenden, SEEC Head of Policy Co-ordination



Recommendation:

That members agree proposed key messages to highlight to Government and other decision makers in the Spring 2014 Dashboard update.

1. Background

1.1 This is the 6th edition of SEEC's Data Dashboard. Published twice a year, it is used to highlight key issues to Government and other decision makers, as well as helping SEEC members identify key issues where action is needed. Evidence in the Dashboard helps underpin members' current policy discussions, for example influencing Party election manifestos, responding to London's housing plans and the Care Bill.

2. Draft Dashboard Spring 2014 - Key Issues for Member Comment

2.1 A high-level overview of key data follows on the next page. Due to the large electronic file size, draft overviews for the six key themes in the Dashboard update will be available in hard copy at the all-member meeting rather than emailed. The full updated Dashboard, some 40+ sheets, with local data where available, will be on SEEC's website for members in the Spring.

2.2 At a high level the South East continues to perform relatively well on a number of issues. As demonstrated by Oxford Economics' data, the South East offers significant returns on investment to Government and the UK as a whole, making a net contribution of £6.3bn in 2010/11. However a number of challenges exist. Maximising the South East's key role in driving the national economy will require national and local infrastructure/transport investment and action to maximise success, as well as tackle significant deprivation and meet the needs of our large growing & ageing population.

2.3 Based on the latest Dashboard data, we recommend the following issues are emphasised, in addition to more detailed points highlighted in the overviews available in hard copy at the meeting. Members' views are invited on these or any other issues:

- A) **Economy & Employment** - *There is a strong message that the SE's economic success cannot be taken for granted - appropriate policy & investment is required in skills, employability & transport infrastructure to meet business needs and tackle key challenges eg high unemployment.*
- B) **Housing & Infrastructure** - *There remains need for significant local and national action & investment to deliver sufficient affordable housing, as well as transport and other infrastructure to support the SE's high levels of housing growth, given both population size and the need to ensure economic success.*
- C) **Public Finances & Grants** - *There is a need for a balanced approach nationally to ensure appropriate levels of central government and European funding in the SE, to support the local commitment to growth and fuel our potential to support national economic recovery and reflect the SE's large population.*
- D) **Demography** - *Continued investment and action is needed to address the opportunities & challenges of population change, including care and health services given our large and growing older population and long-term areas of deprivation.*
- E) **Migration** - *Although SE net international migration has fallen to England's 4th highest level, long-term national & local financial commitment is needed to address public service impacts of population growth & churn. Time lags & limitations in official data (for example there is no deregistration for National Insurance Numbers) must be addressed by government so local needs & central funding requirements can be better addressed.*
- F) **Environment** - *Overall whilst some of the trends are positive, there is a need for continued effort & investment to address the significant levels of waste arising in the SE.*

