

**SOUTH EAST ENGLAND COUNCILS**  
**MINUTES OF THE ALL-MEMBER MEETING & AGM**

Thursday 3 July 2014

Church House Conference Centre, Dean's Yard, London SW1P 3NZ



The numbering below reflects the fact that this meeting followed a joint SEEC-SESL session which covered agenda items 1-3, note available [here](#).

**4. Welcome, apologies, declarations of substitutes and declarations of interest**

4.1 Cllr Gordon Keymer CBE welcomed members. Apologies and substitutes are in the attached attendance list. There were no declarations of interest.

**5. SEEC political balance following May 2014 elections**

5.1 Allocation of SEEC Executive seats following the May 2014 elections was Conservative 11, Labour 3, Lib-Dem 3. Smaller parties have 12.9% of votes, but no single party exceeds the 5% of seats threshold for Executive representation. If smaller parties form a coalition they could take two Executive seats. If not, the political balance would reallocate the 2 seats to Conservatives.

**ACTION 1: SEEC to write to the smaller parties inviting them to form a coalition to take up SEEC Executive seats. In the interim, Conservative members to fill the seats.**

**6. Election of South East England Councils' Chairman for 2014-15**

6.1 Gordon Keymer CBE (Tandridge DC, Con) was re-elected Chairman.

**7. Election of Deputy Chairman, Secretary/ Treasurer, Vice Chairmen, Executive Committee and Districts' Chairman/ Deputy**

7.1 David Hodge (Surrey CC, Con) was re-elected Deputy Chairman. Thanks were recorded to Paul Watkins, stepping down as Secretary/Treasurer. Nicolas Heslop (Tonbridge & Malling, Con) was elected as new Secretary/Treasurer. Tony Page (Reading, Lab) and Keith House (Eastleigh, Lib-Dem) are SEEC Vice Chairmen.

7.2 In addition to the names above, Executive Committee appointments were:

**Conservatives:** Paul Bettison, Bracknell Forest; Andrew Bowles, Swale BC; Paul Carter, Kent CC; Myles Cullen, Chichester DC; Ian Hudspeth, Oxfordshire CC; Roy Perry, Hampshire CC; Bob Standley, Wealden DC; Martin Tett, Buckinghamshire CC. If smaller groups do not take up Executive seats, further Conservative appointments would be Carole Paternoster, Aylesbury Vale DC and Ken Crookes, Hart DC.

**Labour:** John Burden, Gravesham BC; Van Coulter, Oxford City Council.

**Lib-Dems:** Gill Mattock, Eastbourne BC; David Neighbour, Hart DC.

**Ex Officio:** Moira Gibson (Surrey Heath, Con) District Leaders' Chairman; Roland Dibbs (Rushmoor, Con) Districts' Deputy Chairman; David Burbage MBE (RB of Windsor & Maidenhead, Con) SESL Chairman.

**8. Nominations to external bodies**

8.1 Gordon Keymer was nominated as the SEEC representative on the LGA Executive. Nominations to other external bodies are not due for review.

**9. Invest in success – how to maximise South East economic potential**

9.1 Paul Swinney, Centre for Cities, said South East cities (e.g. Reading, Milton Keynes, Brighton and Aldershot) are among the UK's best performing city economies and surrounding areas play a role providing housing and public services for workers. There are successful non-city economies in the SE, but this is partly due to proximity to London. There is a "blurred economy" between London and the SE, which should lead to scepticism about "city-state" tax-keep status for London. Rather, inter-relatedness should be embraced, and London and the SE should work together.

9.2 Lee Shostak, Shared Intelligence, said the South East is the nation's most important economic asset. All areas want prosperity – but if some areas don't want housing

growth it is important to have an honest discussion on this and get simplicity back into the planning system. Areas that want growth need to plan to deliver it, but LEPs are not addressing the key infrastructure and skills challenges. SEEC should work with LEPs to improve how they make decisions. The SE also has to deal with the London challenge. London's housing need could rise to 62,000 units a year but London has only ever built 33,000 pa, so the gap would be met by people moving to the South East.

- 9.3 In discussion, members said that in parts of the SE voters want prosperity but not housing growth as they are keen to maintain their quality of life. The solution may be good quality development in those areas, and making cities more attractive places to live. Members want to be able to promote job-led growth, not just housing-led growth. At present, too much housing development is at the expense of employment sites.
- 9.4 Member concerns included planning system bureaucracy, the need for LEPs to be more accountable and infrastructure funding decisions made in Whitehall, without local input. Suggestions included a Secretary of State for Infrastructure to look at the national picture, plus more responsibility for democratically accountable local authorities.

**ACTION 2: SEEC consider the role it could play in formulating proposals to improve planning and LEPs, so they address key challenges and deliver results for residents.**

## **10. SEEC review of the past year – Cllr Gordon Keymer CBE, SEEC Chairman**

- 10.1 This year marks SEEC's 5<sup>th</sup> birthday. In the past year, work focused on Infrastructure & funding and Health & Wellbeing. SEEC engaged Ministers on issues such as transport, flooding and funding reform. *Clearing the Hurdles*, published with Localis, raised the profile of the non-city debate. SEEC also published *Mind the Gap*, making the case for SE strategic transport, and is working with London to attract national investment for transport. SEEC argued successfully to retain local control of New Homes Bonus, and gained wide support for its call on London to meet its own housing needs.
- 10.2 SEEC and SESL met Defra Minister Dan Rogerson MP on the need for repair and future flood defence funding. A joint campaign sent to SE MPs and Ministerial flood envoys called for funding to give greater weight to preventing economic loss.
- 10.3 Provisional EU funding for the South East increased for 2014-2020, and SEEC ensured member authorities were well-placed to influence new, LEP-led prioritisation of this.
- 10.4 At a workshop in December, Health Minister Earl Howe urged members to take the lead on integration of health and social care and build on good practice showcased at the event. SEEC-SESL ensured Ministers heard SE concerns about the cost of the Care Act, particularly switching large numbers of self-funders to the public purse.

## **11. SEEC financial report: Accounts 2013-14 and subscriptions 2014-15**

- 11.1 SEEC delivered its work programme under budget at £247,000 and almost halved the call on reserves. Members noted the accounts for 2013-14, froze subscriptions for 2014-15 and agreed to diversify SEEC's investments, via accounts with Metrobank, the Charity Bank, Virgin, Santander and Nationwide. Thanks were recorded to Surrey County Council for hosting SEEC.

**ACTION 3: SEEC to open new savings accounts with banks as listed.**

**ACTION 4: SEEC to invoice members for 2014-15 subscriptions.**

## **12. SEEC business plan 2014-15**

- 12.1 Heather Bolton presented a draft business plan for comment. Members expressed interest in a workshop on duty-to-co-operate, and using the Scottish referendum in September as an opportunity to make the case for funding devolution to the South East. Further comments /input were requested by 5 September.

**ACTION 5: Members to email business plan comments to Heather by 5 September.**

**ACTION 6: Updated business plan to be presented to SEEC Executive in September.**

- 12.2 *Post meeting note:* Suggestions immediately after the AGM included a review of SEEC-SESL operations and how to improve cross-organisation crisis co-operation (eg floods).
- 13. Minutes of 6 February 2014 and matters arising not elsewhere on the agenda**
- 13.1 The minutes of the last all-member meeting were agreed as a true and accurate record.
- 14. Confirmed forward meeting dates:**
- 25 September 2014 – SEEC Executive (shared date with SESL)
  - 12 November 2014 – SEEC Executive
- 15. Any Other Business**
- There being no further business, the meeting closed at 15:30.

**Signed:**

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**Gordon Keymer CBE, Chairman**

## SEEC ALL-MEMBER MEETING & AGM 3 JULY 2014: ATTENDANCE LIST

<b>Name</b>	<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Signature / Apologies / Substitute</b>
Gillian Brown	Arun District Council	Yes
Gerry Clarkson	Ashford Borough Council	Apologies
Carole Paternoster	Aylesbury Vale District Council	Yes
Clive Sanders	Basingstoke & Deane Borough Council	Apologies
Paul Bettison	Bracknell Forest Council	Yes
Martin Tett	Buckinghamshire County Council	Yes
John Gilbey	Canterbury City Council	Apologies
Barry Wood	Cherwell District Council	Apologies
Myles Cullen	Chichester District Council	Apologies
Isobel Darby	Chiltern District Council	Yes
Jeremy Kite	Dartford Borough Council	Apologies
Paul Watkins	Dover District Council	Apologies
Richard Millard	East Hampshire District Council	Apologies
Gill Mattock	Eastbourne Borough Council	Apologies
Keith House	Eastleigh Borough Council	Apologies
John O'Reilly	Elmbridge Borough Council	Apologies
Neil Dallen	Epsom & Ewell Borough Council	Yes
John Burden	Gravesham Borough Council	Yes
Stephen Mansbridge	Guildford Borough Council	Sub – Jenny Wicks
Roy Perry	Hampshire County Council	Yes
Ken Crookes	Hart District Council	Yes
Jeremy Birch	Hastings Borough Council	Apologies
Michael Cheshire, MBE	Havant Borough Council	Apologies
Ray Dawe	Horsham District Council	Apologies
Paul Carter, CBE	Kent County Council	Apologies
Ron Maskell	Lewes District Council	Apologies
Garry Wall	Mid Sussex District Council	Apologies
Chris Townsend	Mole Valley District Council	Apologies
Barry Rickman	New Forest District Council	Apologies
Van Coulter	Oxford City Council	Apologies
Ian Hudspeth	Oxfordshire County Council	Yes
Tony Page	Reading Borough Council	Yes
Dr Lynne Hack	Reigate & Banstead Borough Council	Yes
Carl Maynard	Rother District Council	Apologies
David Burbage, MBE	RB of Windsor & Maidenhead	Yes
Patrick Roberts	Runnymede Borough Council	Apologies
Roland Dibbs	Rushmoor Borough Council	Apologies
Peter Fleming	Sevenoaks District Council	Yes
David Monk	Shepway District Council	Yes
Adrian Busby	South Bucks District Council	Apologies

Ann Ducker	South Oxfordshire District Council	Apologies
Robert Watts	Spelthorne Borough Council	Apologies
David Hodge	Surrey County Council	Yes
Moira Gibson	Surrey Heath Borough Council	Yes
Andrew Bowles	Swale Borough Council	Yes
Gordon Keymer, CBE	Tandridge District Council	Yes - chair
Ian Carr	Test Valley Borough Council	Apologies
Iris Johnston	Thanet District Council	Apologies
Nicolas Heslop	Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council	Yes
David Jukes	Tunbridge Wells Borough Council	Apologies
Robert Knowles	Waverley Borough Council	Apologies
Bob Standley	Wealden District Council	Yes
Gordon Lundie	West Berkshire Council	Apologies
Barry Norton	West Oxfordshire District Council	Apologies
Keith Wood	Winchester City Council	Apologies
John Kingsbury	Woking Borough Council	Apologies
Keith Baker	Wokingham Borough Council	Yes
Tony Green	Wycombe District Council	Yes
<b>Speakers</b>		
Sir Edward Lister	Greater London Authority	Yes
Paul Swinney	Centre for Cities	Yes
Lee Shostak	Shared Intelligence & Town and Country Planning Association	Yes
<b>Other Attendees</b>		
Chris Williams	Buckinghamshire County Council	Yes
Heather Bolton	SEEC	Yes
Nick Woolfenden	SEEC	Yes
Nathan Roach	SEEC / SESL	Yes
Philippa Mellish	SESL	Yes
Trevor Pugh	Surrey County Council	Yes
Sarah Gibson	Greater London Authority	Yes
Ruth Morgan	Greater London Authority	Yes
Heather Wills	Local Government Association	Yes
Mark Pearson	Surrey Connects	Yes