

SOUTH EAST ENGLAND COUNCILS EXECUTIVE MEETING



Date: 1 December 2016

Subject: **London's growth – how will it affect the South East?**

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

Recommendations:

Members are asked to:

- i) Note opportunities to influence the new Mayor's London Plan before it is drafted, including registering for the Wider South East Summit on 9 December.
- ii) Share views on South East implications of London's emerging growth plans, to inform member discussions at the Summit and SEEC's response to the Mayor's 'A City for All Londoners' consultation.
- iii) Share views on 2017 priorities for continued political engagement between London, South East and East.

1. Opportunities for SEEC to shape the new London Plan

- 1.1 The new Mayor Sadiq Khan is driving forward a new London Plan to be drafted for consultation in 2017. SEEC members currently have a unique opportunity to shape his thinking prior to drafting by the GLA in early 2017 and formal consultation later in 2017. The London Plan is the statutory planning document for the capital and will include locations and numbers for new housing. Over the past two years SEEC members have shared views and concerns with the previous Mayor of London about South East implications of London's growth plans – most notably to caution against assuming that the South East has capacity to accommodate significant overspill housing from London if the capital cannot meet its own needs. Development of the new London Plan will raise a number of issues for South East leaders to consider.
- 1.2 The Mayor has set out his early vision for the capital in a new 94-page consultation '[A City for All Londoners](#)'. SEEC secured places for several South East leaders to attend the launch event on 31 October with Deputy Mayor Jules Pipe. This 'vision' document sets out the Mayor's direction of travel and common themes that will be followed through in more detail in the London Plan and 7 further strategies (Transport; Housing; Environment; Economic Development; Health Inequalities; Culture; Policing & Crime).
- 1.3 SEEC members have two key ways to shape early thinking on the London Plan prior to drafting by the GLA:
 - By attending the Wider South East (WSE) political Summit on 9 December, jointly arranged by SEEC, EELGA, GLA and London Councils – registration at the very latest by today's meeting (1 December) to admin@secouncils.gov.uk; council Leaders/portfolio holders and LEP chairs from across the area have been invited.
 - Contribute to shaping SEEC's response to the Mayor's 'vision' consultation.
- 1.4 Member views are invited on key issues and questions below to inform SEEC's input.

2. South East implications of new Mayor's consultation 'A City for all Londoners'

- 2.1 The Mayor's 'vision' consultation raises a number of issues and implications for SEEC members, indicating the new London Plan's direction of travel (to be drafted in early 2017):
- 2.2 **Housing:** The new mayor aims to meet housing need within London boundaries as much as possible – for example through higher densities in town centres, 'intensification' in suburbs and developing 'opportunity areas' on brownfield sites capable of providing at least 2,500 homes per site. Early indications are that London will need some 55,000 new homes a year up to 2041.

- 2.3 The Mayor recognises it may not be possible to meet all housing need within London so he wants to explore options outside the boundary with 'partners for growth'. This would be an opportunity for willing areas to collaborate with the Mayor to deliver homes in return for help in attracting transport investment into growth corridors for commuting. This could signal a change in London's approach to the WSE, suggesting the Mayor wants to find 'coalitions of the willing' outside London and target housing growth in those areas as well as within London itself. The scale of housing growth in willing corridors is not yet clear.
- 2.4 **Green Belt:** The Mayor remains committed to protecting Green Belt land in London, despite the fact that many South East councils are having to consider development on the Green Belt to meet their local housing need.
- 2.5 **Industrial land:** The Mayor is interested in trying to relocate some industrial land from London to parts of the South East. This could free up land for housing within London and offer potential for moving jobs to the South East. More detail will be needed on the type of jobs and businesses that could move and whether they match South East councils' economic ambitions (for example in terms of skills levels, business sectors, impact on local transport and environment).

3. **Key questions to inform SEEC consultation response and preparation for Wider South East (WSE) political Summit 9 December 2016**

- 3.1 Member views are invited on key issues to inform the consultation response, as well as prepare for discussion at the Summit:
- How can the **Mayor address London's emerging gap between housing demand and supply?**
 - Is there a role/willingness for **collaboration on growth corridors and growth area/towns further afield in the South East** to help take some of London's growth?
 - Is there a role/willingness to jointly address the potential for **relocation of industry and businesses from London to the South East** to free up land for homes in London?
 - What should be the **balance between London's development needs and our environmental/ other land-use policies eg Green Belt?**
 - Are there **other options to consider to help the Mayor meet London's housing needs?**
 - How **could/should the London Plan reflect important WSE issues** eg. a section on key economic/infrastructure interlinkages to support economic success and growth of London and WSE?
- 3.2 The Summit will also discuss wider priorities for WSE political engagement during 2017 – this will build on existing engagement through the Political Steering Group (5 members each from South East, East and London) and the annual Summit (to which all Leaders are invited). Members are invited to share views on whether to continue or change the existing priorities and how to address the issues:
- **London Plan** – shaping Mayor's strategy/policies.
 - **Housing barriers** – tackling barriers to delivery of approved permissions, including forthcoming meeting with Housing Minister Gavin Barwell.
 - **Strategic transport** – jointly supporting the case for mutually beneficial strategic transport schemes, drawing on SEEC work such as Missing Links.
 - **Shared understanding of evidence** – discussions re data that underpins the new London Plan and implications for WSE.
- 3.3 Member views on whether progress should be maintained on these, or changed (eg greater emphasis on economic growth or environment/natural resources), would be welcome.