

# SOUTH EAST ENGLAND COUNCILS

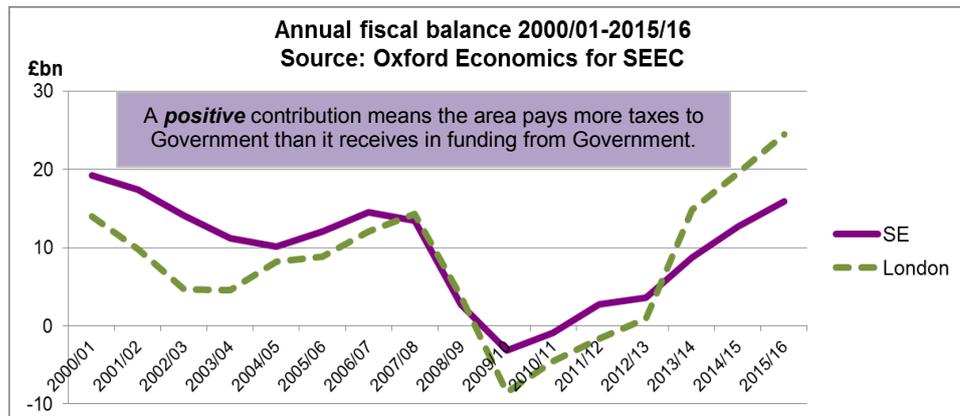
## SOUTH EAST MP BRIEFING: MAXIMISING ECONOMIC POTENTIAL



As we prepare for Brexit it is vital that we all work together to make sure the UK economy can reach its maximum potential. The South East has traditionally generated the highest net profits for Treasury, but new data for South East England Councils (SEEC) reinforces our concerns that inadequate infrastructure funding is holding back our economic potential.

We believe the South East needs increased investment to deliver its full potential for UK plc and want to ask for your support in helping us make the case for a greater share of infrastructure funding.

Newly-commissioned research shows that while the South East contributed the highest net financial surplus to Treasury of £154.4bn from 2000/01 to 2015/16, **our net returns were £21.6bn lower than London over the past 3 years. This means the South East economy is failing to deliver its full potential to help Treasury fund infrastructure and public services UK-wide.** It also means the Treasury and the UK are becoming increasingly reliant on London's economy alone.



SEEC brings together local authorities from all tiers of council and all parties to address shared concerns. Our members believe the South East's changing fortunes are due to a growing gap in per-capita public spending, including on areas such as transport and enterprise investment. Between 2000/01 and 2015/16 per-capita public spending in London rose from £7,056 to £12,628, while the South East rose from £5,274 to £10,334.

Our members are clear that without increased infrastructure investment the South East economy will be disadvantaged and will fail to achieve its full potential. **Further work for SEEC has shown that the South East will have an infrastructure funding gap of £15.4bn by 2030.** This is just 10% of the net profit the South East economy has contributed to the Treasury since 2000. The South East economy has a proud history of generating a surplus for UK plc but **we urgently need to see a fairer share of our net profit re-invested in South East transport, skills and hi-tech infrastructure to help us return to maximum potential.**

As we focus on securing the best possible future for Britain outside the European Union, it is also critical to ensure the South East can compete internationally for foreign investment. Incoming businesses need to see investment in better road, rail, air and sea links that enhance our excellent strategic location, or they will invest in competitor countries.

We also have pleasure in enclosing our latest SEEC Data Dashboard. The 2-page summary highlights some of the economic and social challenges facing residents, businesses and councils in your constituency and across the South East.

We hope you find the Dashboard helpful to shed light on key issues affecting our area and **we would welcome your support in making the case to Government for increased investment in the South East.** We would be pleased to discuss any of the topics raised.

**Cllr Nicolas Heslop,**  
SEEC Chairman and Leader of Tonbridge & Malling BC

**Cllr Roy Perry,**  
SEEC Deputy Chairman and Leader of Hampshire CC

