

SOUTH EAST FIRST

The Newsletter of South East England Councils

November 2018



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SEEC debates input to consultations on housing delivery

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Smart planning - an opportunity to learn from London

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News Roundup

Wider South East summit 2019

Preparation is underway for the next Wider South East Summit with the Mayor of London on 11 January 2019. Discussions between SEEC, GLA and East of England are in hand to reach joint agreement on agenda topics and key discussion items to deliver an interactive event. Summit invitations for SEEC members will be circulated in late November.

Skills presentation

SEEC's recent report on '[Evidencing the South East's skills gaps and challenges](#)' stimulated discussion on skills needs in coastal West Sussex. SEEC introduced key issues at November's meeting of the [Coastal West Sussex Partnership Board](#). Members from councils, businesses and training providers considered implications for their area, with a particular focus on how to encourage the take-up of higher-skilled apprenticeships by young people.

SEEC business plan

The SEEC [business plan](#) for the coming 12 months has been finalised following member comments on a draft presented in September. The final plan incorporating member comments is now online.

Fairer funding

An [article by SEEC's Chairman appeared in LGC](#) earlier this month, highlighting the need for a fairer funding deal for local government to deliver more equitable per capita spending across England.

SEEC Dates

[30 November 2018 – SEEC Executive](#)
18 December 2018 – South East Post-Brexit Roadshow (joint with LGA)
11 January 2019 - Wider South East Summit
31 January 2019 - SEEC All-Member meeting

Contacts

[Heather Bolton – SEEC Director](#)
[Nick Woolfenden – Policy Co-ordination](#)

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SEEC role confirmed at London Plan Examination in Public

Confirmation has been received this month that SEEC will give evidence at the London Plan Examination in Public (EiP), starting in January 2019.

This is an important opportunity for SEEC to ensure the panel of inspectors hears the views of South East councils on the London Mayor's ambitious growth plans for the capital and on how to manage potential implications for the South East.

Between 15 January and mid-May 2019, the EiP's three planning inspectors will gather views on the London Plan, with written submissions invited in advance of the formal sessions. The EiP follows public consultation on the London Plan earlier this year

SEEC will be working collaboratively with SESL to make South East representations at 8 sessions including:

- Duty to co-operate and consultation
- London's spatial development proposals
- Wider South East policies in the London Plan
- Housing strategy
- Housing targets and supply
- Land for industry, logistics and services
- Green Belt
- Transport strategy and schemes.

SEEC highlights care challenges at Westminster ageing event

SEEC Executive member Cllr Bob Standley (pictured above) took part in roundtable discussions on care and health information for older people this month.

The House of Lords event on 1 November was hosted by Lord Filkin, organised by [South East England Forum for Ageing](#) and chaired by David Brindle, Public Services Editor at The Guardian. SEEC and a range of public, voluntary and private sector partners explored how to ensure older people get good access to information about health and care services.

Cllr Standley - Leader of Wealden DC - highlighted the funding challenge for councils in meeting the care needs of the South East's large and growing older population. He said all partners need to work together to ensure older people get the right information about care and health services at the right time. SEEC has recently [highlighted](#) principles to inform the Government's forthcoming green paper and help tackle the South East's long-term social care funding challenge.

Other areas of discussion at the event included the importance of technology as well as face-to-face contact for information sharing with older people. Joining up neighbourhood sources of information and advice (ranging from web-based '[Nextdoor](#)' social networks to Village Agents – who link communities and service providers) could also help at the very local level.

SEEC debates input to consultations on housing delivery

November's SEEC Executive will consider how to respond to recent Government proposals and consultations that aim to boost delivery of new homes nationally.

With housing a top priority for national and local government, SEEC members will be [discussing the implications for the South East](#) of consultations on housing need assessments and changes to planning rules for permitted development, disposal of land and compulsory purchase. They will also consider the recommendations in Sir Oliver Letwin's independent review of house building rates.

SEEC members have previously expressed disappointment about MHCLG's reluctance to change housing assessment calculations, despite the fact that they delivered unexpected results in both the South East and nationally. The previous formula had no clear route to adapt housing numbers to take account of the restrictions arising from the South East's 1 million acres of protected land, including National Parks, AONB and Green Belt.

Previous concerns have also been raised about permitted development rights – for example fast track changes of use from offices to residential. Previously SEEC has argued there should be more local input to such plans to ensure quality homes are delivered and that there should be mechanisms to ensure such changes of use make a contribution to funding local infrastructure needs.

Consultation on [housing need assessments](#) runs until 7 December and consultation on [planning reform](#) - permitted development, land disposal and compulsory purchase - runs until 14 January 2019.

Smart planning - an opportunity to learn from London

Proposals being developed in London to share planning application information could be available to South East councils interested in digitising their planning systems.

The Greater London Authority (GLA) is taking steps to meet Government's objective to get a clearer picture of development happening on the ground by using digital planning solutions.

An automated system is being designed, which will allow the GLA to streamline how development monitoring data flows from London's 35 Local Planning Authorities to City Hall. Currently, this process is manual and could be much more efficient. Automation will enable the collection of more detailed, accurate information at a lower cost to local authorities. It will also enable the GLA to build a public, central, and easily accessible online hub of planning application information for London.

Expected benefits go beyond cost savings and include better public engagement in the planning process, cross-

border planning and joined up development monitoring within councils. MHCLG has encouraged the GLA to identify authorities beyond London who would like to come on this journey as well. The GLA will share the technical solution it creates, for free, with interested authorities.

Any interested South East planning authorities can contact Peter Kemp, GLA Planning Change Manager for a discussion and further information: Peter.Kemp@london.gov.uk

Molly Strauss from the GLA has published two online articles explaining more about the GLA's [research](#) into the problem, and [vision](#) for a solution..

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