

SOUTH EAST FIRST

The Newsletter of South East England Councils

With best wishes for 2019 from SEEC

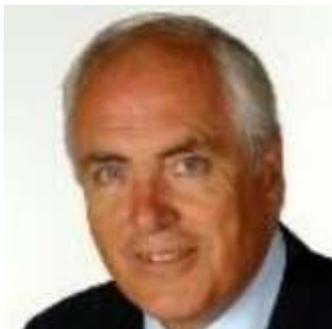
December 2018



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News Roundup

Wider South East summit 2019

The 2019 Wider South East Summit with the Mayor of London Sadiq Khan takes place on 11 January. The Summit – currently at full capacity – will give councillors from the South East, East of England and London the opportunity to discuss growth with the Mayor. SEEC Deputy Chairman Cllr Ralph Bagge will take part in a

plenary debate with the Mayor and SEEC Vice Chairman Cllr Tony Page will represent Transport for the South East in a discussion with Deputy Mayor Jules Pipe.

EU settled status: Toolkit for local authorities

The Home Office has [published a toolkit this month](#), offering local authorities off-the-shelf materials to use with EU citizens living locally who may need to apply for settled status post Brexit. Materials in the toolkit can be used directly with EU citizens, to explain what they need to do to secure their right to continue living and working in the UK. The toolkit contains a leaflet, poster, factsheets and a briefing pack to help local authorities communicate clear and consistent messages about the EU Settlement Scheme.

SEEC Dates

11 January 2019 - Wider South East Summit
31 January 2019 - SEEC All-Member meeting
29 March 2019 - SEEC Executive (shared date with SESL)

Contacts

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Maintaining strong South East economy post Brexit will be vital

SEEC Chairman Cllr Roy Perry has highlighted the need to maintain the South East's economic strength post Brexit. He outlined its importance at a South East roadshow on 18 December.

Discussions from the roadshow, arranged by the LGA, SEEC and SESL for South East authorities, will feed into a 2019 report from the LGA's Post Brexit Commission. The Commission has been established by the LGA's People and Places Board to understand more about the issues and opportunities facing non-metropolitan England after Brexit.

Cllr Perry stressed the importance of [continued South East economic growth after Brexit](#) as the 'Super South' economy underpins much public spending UK-wide. But to maintain this, the South East needs investment and greater local input into overcoming skills and infrastructure gaps.

Other sessions gave an overview of key South East opportunities and challenges, and speakers on skills and freight addressed ways to deliver better outcomes after Brexit.

SEEC Brexit practicalities workshop: 31 January 2019

SEEC's All-Member meeting on 31 January will be a workshop on Brexit, addressing practical impacts for the South East. The event is free for member councils.

Workshop sessions will cover the role that migrant skills play in the South East economy, ways to fill any workforce gaps, keeping trade links open and maintaining public services. Speakers include:

- Chichester MP Gillian Keegan, Co-chair of the APPG on Apprenticeships, covering the potential for homegrown skills to fill any gaps in the workforce post-Brexit.
- Cllr Kevin Bentley, Chair of the LGA Brexit Taskforce, with an overview of the challenges and opportunities for South East local authorities.
- Rob McNeil, Oxford University, on the role of EU nationals in the South East economy and EU worker

- trends since the Brexit referendum in 2016.
- Cllr Mike Whiting, Kent CC, on preparing borders and ports for Brexit.
 - Ian Hoult, Hampshire CC Head of Emergency Planning, on keeping public services running.

In advance of the workshop there will also be a short session for members, with updates about ongoing SEEC business.

The workshop is free of charge for SEEC member authorities. There are still places available for councillors and senior officers from SEEC authorities. If you would like to reserve a place please email admin@secouncils.gov.uk.

Housing need assessments do not reflect South East challenges

SEEC input to government has reiterated the case for revising local housing need assessments after latest proposals did not address key South East concerns.

In a consultation response this month, SEEC [members expressed disappointment](#) that proposed changes to the methodology will do nothing to avoid undeliverable targets. The methodology will deliver unachievable increases for many parts of the South East which have existing high growth levels but limited further capacity. Meanwhile reductions in other parts of the South East with the will and capacity to grow – and in ambitious northern cities – risk undermining local growth plans.

A particular concern in many areas of the South East is the difficulty of reconciling the outputs of the standard housing need methodology with the amount of land that has statutory protection, for example AONB or National Parks, and Green Belt.

SEEC members were keen to stress that the South East is not trying to avoid housing growth because evidence shows that the area saw the UK's highest building levels in the three years to March 2018 – when more than 110,600 new homes were completed.

SEEC debates options on using land value to fund infrastructure

SEEC's Executive meeting on 30 November debated the pros and cons of land value capture as a way of funding greater investment in South East infrastructure.

Members discussed options for capturing land value during the development process and heard from two expert speakers. The first speaker was Professor Christine Whitehead from the London School of Economics, who also advises the MHCLG committee on housing supply. The second speaker was Julian Ware, Senior Principal at Transport for London, who has led work to try and identify a suitable way to capture land value to fund transport improvements in the capital.

Both speakers explained that [some of the recognised land value capture models](#) had proved difficult or unpopular to introduce. For example, development rights auctions were unpopular with the public who could see it as selling planning permission to the highest bidder. London had instead decided to levy a small mayoral charge on new developments and was using this money to help fund Crossrail 2.

In discussion, SEEC members said the South East's significant need for infrastructure investment could underpin the case for exploring whether a small levy on new developments might be viable. SEEC will consider principles that could help shape an approach to land value capture in the South East. There was also interest in whether some form of levy on development around an expanded Heathrow could be used to help fund access routes to the airport from the South East.

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