

SOUTH EAST ENGLAND DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

BOARD MEETING ON 23 JULY 2009

ITEM 14

AGENCY REPORT

Recommendation

The Board is invited to **NOTE** the Agency Activity Report for June and July which represents a cross section of reports from within SEEDA organised according to the themes of SEEDA's Corporate Plan 2008-11.

GLOBAL COMPETITIVENESS

Global Markets programme

1. SEEDA has secured seven inward investment successes since the last report, which will create 118 new jobs over the next three years, and safeguard a further 757.

Business Development

Paris Airshow – France – 15-21 June

2. SEEDA representatives from France and Germany, and SEEDA's Director of Business Development, attended this year's Paris Airshow. Despite the recession the show had more than 2,000 exhibitors from 48 countries, setting a new record. Meetings were held with 11 potential investors, as well as with several other organisations in order to build relationships, including The French Association of Innovative Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) who wish to develop a deeper and more formal collaboration with SEEDA.

Research and Development Programme

National Aerospace Technology Strategy

HealthMap

3. The interim evaluation by GHK Consulting has now been completed. It concluded that the programme has been successful and that new disruptive technologies are likely to emerge from the programme after it ends in December 2009. The report also concluded that whilst a very valuable experience for the Small and Medium Enterprise partners, improvements should be sought in order to strengthen linkages between the SMEs and Industry Primes and Universities in the UK.

Innovation and Creativity Programme

Innovation and Growth

Surrey Innovation and Growth Team

4. Last month, GeoSolveIT, a client of the West Surrey and North East Hants Innovation and Growth Team, was invited together with 149 of the country's other leading innovators to meet Prime Minister Gordon Brown and Business Secretary Lord Mandelson for an evening Reception at Number 10. During the Reception, The Prime Minister heard at first hand how innovative businesses, such as GeoSolveIT, are making the most of the opportunities created by the recession and dealing with the challenges ahead.

Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics Careers Roadshows

5. SEEDA has undertaken to stage a series of regional careers road shows to encourage redundant/newly qualified Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics (STEM) professionals into appropriate opportunities and support skills development for economic regeneration. These include actual STEM job vacancies, internships, post graduate degrees, training opportunities and self employment. To date two events have been held during June, at the universities of Sussex and Southampton with a total attendance of about 460. A further two STEM roadshows are under consideration for early autumn, at Reading and London (with London Development Agency). The BBC Politics Show filmed at Southampton on the day and interviewed SEEDA's Head of Leadership and Management. This was shown on Sunday 21 June.

Skills for Innovation

6. On Monday 29 June, [REDACTED] (Jim Garrahy's Fudge Kitchen) presented at the London and South East Graduate Internship Dialogue on the benefits her company have received through SEEDA's Business+ scheme. Business+, a pilot of the national Shorter Knowledge Transfer Partnership (KTP) scheme (launched on the 1 July) places a graduate in a company for a period of up to 40 weeks on a project of strategic importance to the company. Positions available under shorter KTP will feature as a graduate opportunity on the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills Graduate Talent Pool web site when this is launched for students later in July. SEEDA, in its Lead Role capacity, sits on the Ministerial Graduate Employment Forum to advise the Minister on support for unemployed graduates through internships. The Graduate Talent Pool has been developed through this group.

Manufacturing Advisory Service

7. The new and enhanced Manufacturing Advisory Service (MAS) programme has published the first edition of the new Observatory bulletin. The Observatory is intended as a monthly look at the market, economy, new initiatives and success stories, seen through the eyes of manufacturers in the region. A synthesis of current information and news, it aims to provide SEEDA and its partners with a concise overview of what's current in South East manufacturing – with a focus on the issues affecting small and medium sized manufacturing businesses in the region.
8. MAS-SE has received good PR in the form of a positive article in the Financial Times, showcasing how a couple of South East companies have stepped up

the design of new products and overhauled their production processes through the support on offer from MAS-SE. Both were 'clean-tech' companies.

Design

Innovation and Design Event, Malmaison Hotel, Oxford 15 June 2009

9. SEEDA and the Design Council jointly hosted a working dinner involving senior business people from the design community who have a particular interest in promoting and strengthening innovation and design in their business sectors. Derek Wyatt MP, who has a particular interest in design, took part in the event joining senior business figures from Virgin, Isis Innovation, Carnival Group, Raymarine and representatives from Brighton and Portsmouth Universities.

Sector Consortia

Envirobusiness South East

10. Envirobusiness South East launched its "Global Leadership in Environmental Technologies and Services" programme on 4 June to more than 50 South East based environmental technology and service innovators. The programme, funded by SEEDA, has a twin objective: to support high potential businesses to trade more successfully internationally, thus helping to grow the market share; and in parallel, to make the South East a showcase for environmental technology and services, thereby also helping with the region's ecological footprint.

SMART GROWTH

Enterprise

Solutions for Business – Business Support Simplification

11. The mapping of all SEEDA-funded business support services, and those funded by local authorities throughout the region, is now complete. There are over 340 existing services operating within the region which are thought to be within scope of Solutions for Business. A number of regional products which do not fit with the new portfolio have already closed - including a number of SEEDA funded services.
12. Some services are already operating under the new Solutions for Business brand; this includes MAS and SEEDA's newly forming South East Business Innovation and Growth teams. SEEDA remains on track for the transition to the new Solutions for Business arrangements by 31 March 2010.

Women's Enterprise Regional activity

13. SEEDA's Women's Enterprise Steering Group recently reviewed statistics collected from the 08/09 series of What's Stopping You? events. Business Link Providers had a target of 900 attendees over the 11 region-wide events, with an actual attendance of over 1200. Attendees were surveyed to investigate their

reasons for considering self employment and perceived barriers. These statistics will help shape the next series of events, which are due to start in October 2009.

Learning and Skills Council Capital Spend decisions

14. On 26 June the Learning and Skills Council announced the results of their review of the Capital Spend programme. In our skills lead role SEEDA had led RDA work to contribute to the assessment and prioritization process, seeking to ensure that economic development criteria were included; as well as to influence the results for the South East. The amount of funding available meant that only 13 colleges across England were announced; including North West Kent College in the SE. SEEDA will now engage with the LSC nationally – as well as regionally – to help to find solutions for those colleges who were unsuccessful, for example through exploring innovative finance options and alternative learning solutions such as work-based learning.

Enterprising Britain

15. Chatham Historic Dockyard has been nominated by SEEDA as the most enterprising place in the South East, to compete in the national Enterprising Britain 2009 competition. The Chatham Historic Dockyard Trust has been recognised for its success in transforming the site from a redundant dockyard to an exciting and vibrant location for business, learning and living, creating Chatham Maritime which is a flagship development of more than 1,000 homes and 130 businesses. The site is home to more than 3,500 jobs and attracts more than 150,000 visitors per annum to its museums, ships and tourist attractions. During July, Chatham Historic Dockyard will be given the chance to prove that it is worthy of the national Enterprising Britain 2009 title, when it is visited by members of the national judging panel. Hastings and Bexhill Economic Alliance were also commended as the South East Runner Up, for their continued commitment to enterprise in supporting the regeneration of Hastings, and engaging those, particularly from disadvantaged communities, to pursue and create a culture of enterprise.

Broadband Working with BT and Openreach

16. SEEDA has brokered meetings between BT and key local authority stakeholders to determine areas where BT's £1,500m investment in superfast broadband will be most likely to secure demand from businesses and residents. BT also needs to be assured that the local planning system can accommodate applications for the widespread deployment of new street cabinets. Meetings are taking place in the first instance with the Diamonds and with Priority Regeneration Areas, the aim being to attract this business critical infrastructure investment to these areas.

Procurement

Social Care Procurement Report

17. The SEEDA funded and initiated Sustainable Social Care Procurement Report presents the findings from a project to identify opportunities for enhanced competitiveness and to open new markets through business to business collaboration between South East Healthcare Technologies Alliance and South East Social Care Alliance (SESCA). Adult Social Care is a £10bn pa industry, nearly all in the private sector, and SESCOA will be looking at business opportunities with two other sector consortia, Envirobusiness and South East Media Network. The real impact has been on influencing policy and strategy because the report confirms that Adult Social Care is a public service delivered by the private sector which has been excluded from policy and strategy development. The SEEDA intervention means that Department of Health, Local Authorities, National Health Service, National Skills Council for Care and other commissioning and policy bodies will now engage the private sector, facilitated by SEEDA.

Encouraging Collaborative Procurement

18. Regional Development Agencies are required to look at public procurement in terms of economic impact and as a means of influencing outcomes including legislation compliance, innovation and growth, sustainability and enterprise. SEEDA has already seized the initiative and started implementing by working closely on collaborative procurement through converging agendas internally and externally with National Health Service and Improvement and Efficiency South East (the South East Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnership, established to help the region's 74 local authorities). Areas already identified include supporting local businesses, especially SMEs, into procurement portals, e-procurement, pre qualification questionnaires (PQQs) and contracts. There is also a big opportunity to influence regional and national initiatives such as follow up to the Glover report on improving SME participation in public procurement; Equality and Diversity; Women's Enterprise; and reducing waste and energy.

Tourism

Tourism Southeast

19. Tourism Southeast has completed the recruitment of a new senior management team following the resignation of the Managing Director [REDACTED] and the conclusion of the Chair, Nigel Walmsley's term of office.
20. Mike Bedingfield has been appointed as Chief Executive of Tourism South East. Mike joins from VisitBritain, where he has undertaken various marketing roles since 2003, latterly as the Director of Marketing, responsible for developing the England brand domestically and the Britain brand internationally. John Williams has been appointed as the new chair of Tourism South East. His background is brand and communications having founded Fishburn Hedges the quoted PR and communications agency for which he is a senior advisor.

Business Support for the Business Network and CompeteFor

21. CompeteFor is the pre-qualification questionnaire system for contracts related to the London 2012 Paralympic and Olympic games a partnership with all the

RDAs, Devolved Administrations, Olympic Delivery Authority and London Organising Committee of the Olympic Games.

22. There are now over 75,000 business registered on the system, which is still growing at over a thousand a month. The South East is still the most active outside London, with 14,000 companies registered and 6,000 or 47% shown as ready to tender – the average nationally being 45%. Overall the South East has won 145 contracts related to 2012, of which 21 contracts have been awarded through CompeteFor. 1,300 companies from the region have been shortlisted for contracts, representing 21% of all companies shortlisted.

SUSTAINABLE PROSPERITY

Low Carbon Programme

Regional low carbon building retrofitting fund and European Investment Bank

23. Following contacts made by the Chairman with the EU Commission in May, SEEDA has submitted an Expression of Interest to the European Investment Bank (EIB) for a regional building retrofitting fund. The total fund value is likely to be €200m with half from the EIB and the remainder from commercial lenders. The funds will be invested in energy efficiency measures and renewable energy in public sector buildings – offices, schools, universities, hospitals – using an established framework known as Energy Performance Contracting. Typically the investment results in 20% carbon and costs savings which are used to pay off the loan over a 5 to 10 year period, with savings thereafter accruing to the owner. We expect this level of funding will enable retrofitting of around 500 buildings and will initially be focused on the Diamonds for Investment and Growth. A number of Local Authorities have pledged their commitment.
24. We have now been asked to submit a long list of suitable buildings to the Bank. We will work with public sector energy managers to collate this list in readiness for a more detailed meeting with the Bank which we expect to take place in October. If successful, we expect a scheme to be in place by next summer.

POWER 1ST call

25. POWER is a €5.8m inter-regional programme aimed at driving Low Carbon Economies partly funded through INTERREG IVC in seven European regions: Andalusia (Spain), Emilia-Romagna (Italy), Malopolska (Poland), Noord-Brabant (The Netherlands), South East England (England), Stockholm (Sweden), and Tallinn (Estonia).
26. Eleven applications were received involving 37 organisations across the partner regions under the first call for proposals. Four projects were approved under conditions by the International steering Committee in Brussels on 29 and 30 June. The decision will be made public after negotiations have been finalized in early Summer 2009. A second round for funding will be open on 15 October 2009.

Launch of PEOPLE

27. PEOPLE is a €4m inter-regional programme aimed at exploring new forms of employment, improving well-being and cohesion in the light of the demographic and societal changes faced by most European regions. The programme is partly funded through INTERREC IVC and involves seven participating European Regions: Andalucia (Spain) leading the programme, South East England, Venezia (Italy), Noord-Brabant (the Netherlands), Malopolska (Poland), Stockholm (Sweden) and Timis (Romania).
28. The PEOPLE programme was launched on 17 June 2009 in Seville (Andalucia) with a call for proposals inviting local and sub-regional stakeholders to participate with innovative ideas and solutions. The event involved over 100 participants and was transmitted live on the People website.

Natural and Rural Resources

Rural Development Programme for England

29. Through the Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE) SEEDA has approved a £90,000 grant towards a £450,000 project to support a Hampshire abattoir with lamb processing. The project utilises innovative new packaging techniques which will significantly reduce the size and amount of packaging used to pack lamb cuts for major retailers. It is estimated that the project will reduce packaging usage by 15% and reduce lorry movements by 85%.

Sustainable Communities Programme

Reaching for Gold – a South East ‘Dragons Den’

30. On 20 May the South East Corporate Cabinet launched a new region-wide competition aimed at encouraging young people in the South East to collaborate with countries competing in the 2012 Olympic Games. The competition is supported by a unique collaboration between SEEDA, nine corporate partners and three voluntary and community sector organisations. Reaching for Gold invites 14-19 year olds to develop ideas that make a practical difference to society, and will help them develop the skills needed to operate in a global economy. All projects must include opportunities for international collaboration as youngsters work creatively with their peers from overseas. The successful 14-19-year-olds will have the chance to be intensively mentored by an experienced corporate partner, helping them prepare for a ‘Dragon’s Den’ style final to be held at Windsor Castle in December. Reaching for Gold is supported by corporate partners BT, CISCO, Honda UK, Huawei Technologies, Intel Corporation, Legal and General, PricewaterhouseCoopers, Sony, and Toshiba Information Systems, as well as voluntary sector partners the Prince’s Trust, Groundwork South East and Ability Net.

Making the Most of 2012

Pre-Training Camps

31. Pre Games Training Camps for visiting nations will provide a welcome boost to the regional economy between now and 2012. It is estimated that Team GB's training camp at Aldershot will generate £1m for the local economy, and even the training camps for smaller nations are likely to inject £25,000 or more into the local economy. To date SEEDA has helped to secure Memoranda of Understanding with four competing Countries: Malawi Olympic Committee, Colombia Paralympic Committee, Barbados Paralympic Committee and Uganda Olympic Badminton Team. Discussions with 10 other countries are underway.

South East 2012 Conference

32. This Conference, held in Kent on 10 and 11 June to highlight business opportunities, was attended by John Armitt, Chair of the ODA, and co-hosted by SEEDA, KCC and Business Link Kent. The two day event started with the new contract announcement for Hilliers garden suppliers who will supply 2000 mature trees. John Armitt hosted a dinner for companies who had won contracts and got feedback on the tendering process. The following morning KCC hosted a business breakfast for 170 businesses, followed by the SEEDA Business. Over 500 businesses from across the region were provided with the opportunity to have one-to-one clinics with the ODA procurement team and Business Link support. Feedback from the ODA regarding the visit has been very positive.

2012 Open Weekend

33. To celebrate the launch of the London 2012 Open Weekend in the South East, a 'Get Inspired' stakeholder event will be held on the 24 July in Woking. The aim of the event is to engage local authorities and highlight best practice across the region on various 2012 projects and to showcase events from the weekend such as the Woking Dance Festival.

Equality and Diversity

34. There has been considerable interest from other RDAs in SEEDA's Equality and Diversity data tool. The data tool provides a regional-level evidence base of equalities data for informing strategic development and facilitating the monitoring of programme and project outcomes. The South West has commissioned a data tool based on the SEEDA model, with other RDAs showing interest in following suit.
35. The first meeting of SEEDA's Regional Economic Strategy Equality Advisors panel was held in June, with all SEEDA's newly appointed Equalities experts exhibiting great enthusiasm for supporting SEEDA through its current transition, and helping SEEDA and its partners make the most of the opportunities for the industry sectors in the SE.

ENABLING INFRASTRUCTURE AND DEVELOPMENT

Strategic Development Fund Programme

Cowes Outer Harbour

36. All outstanding issues associated with the proposed development have now been resolved and it is intended that a planning application and the marine consents will be submitted to the Isle of Wight Council by July 2009.

Woolston

37. Commercial negotiations with both Crest Nicholson Regeneration (CNR) and Palmer Johnson continue to progress. It is anticipated that the remediation of the whole site will be completed by the end of July 2009.

Daedalus

38. Following the formal consideration of the Visionary Framework by all relevant stakeholders, including the Local Authorities, the Project Team is progressing with the drafting of two Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs). These will set out the planning policy for the site and form the basis against which future planning applications are determined.

West Medina Mills and Stag Lane

39. Works on the Horsebridge Hill junction started on 18 May and are progressing well. They are scheduled for completion in mid July. It is envisaged the reconstruction of Stag Lane will commence in autumn 2009.
40. Vestas has submitted a reserved matters planning application in respect of the proposed Research and Development facility at West Medina Mills. It is anticipated that this will be determined by the Isle of Wight Council at the end of September 2009.

Queenborough & Rushenden

41. Kent County Council has formally let the contract for the new Rushenden Relief Road. The road is being constructed in sections. This contract will enable the completion of Section 1, opening up the Neats Court employment site and the embankments, railway bridge, and formation of ground for Sections 2 and 3 right the way through to Rushenden Road. A further contract will be required to complete the road to adoptable standards.
42. SEEDA's recent acquisition of compensatory land at Harty marsh continues to deliver on its objectives of achieving planning permission for the development of employment space. SEEDA's assistance in securing this land has resulted in Goodman, a large Australian based multi-national developer, now securing a planning consent for nearly 2,000,000 sq ft of employment space, which has the potential to deliver up to 5,000 jobs.

43. The final version of the Queenborough and Rushenden masterplan has been submitted to Swale Borough Council. It is anticipated that this will go to the October meeting of the Local Development Framework Panel with a recommendation for adoption.

STRATEGIC INFLUENCE

Area Teams

Surrey and Berkshire Area Team

Monitoring the Economic Downturn

44. The Surrey economic intelligence report concludes that businesses are suffering mixed fortunes, with the majority constrained by lack of market demand, while others are exploiting Research and Development and investing in expansion. However, unemployment is still increasing especially for senior managers and professionals. Of concern in both Surrey and Berkshire is the level of job vacancies and the ability of a large number of University Graduates coming onto the labour market to secure employment. This situation will not be helped by notification on redundancies and downsizing by companies such as Legal and General, the impact of which on Reigate and Redhill is yet to be established. However, there have been some positive investments, including Syngenta and UCB expanding their facilities, and Winnersh Triangle's development of office accommodation.

Capacity Building Sub Regional Partnerships

45. SEEDA has negotiated with TVEP a contract for the continued delivery of Inward Investment services for Berkshire. Managed through Berkshire Economic Strategy Board, the service will provide an enquiry handling service and monitor and report on inward investment activity across the sub region.

Shaping Delivery

46. As part of the continuing development of the Heathrow 360, SEEDA, led by Pam Alexander, held a meeting with BAA Chief Executive Colin Matthews to discuss the importance of the airport to the South East economy. As a result of the meeting there was joint agreement on the importance of western access, skills needs, low carbon technology and a single voice forum for the airport and its stakeholders and a commitment to work together on these issues.
47. SEEDA is facilitating and co-ordinating the commission of the Greater South East Study – The Role of the Greater South East in Building Britain's Future – in partnership with the East of England and London Development Agencies. The Study will provide an estimate of the contribution that the Greater South East can make to the delivery of the Government's ambitions for British Industry, and the basis for a collaborative and practical plan to maximise that contribution and build on the comparative advantages of the Greater South East.

Hampshire and Isle of Wight Area Team

Business Support Simplification Programme update

48. SEEDA has met with Hampshire local authorities to update them on BSSP requirements, as a result of which 27 business support activities within the sub-region have been identified that need to make the transition to the new Solutions for Business offer. Over the coming months, the Area Team will be meeting with local authorities to assist in the development of Transition Plans.

The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs coastal erosion report

49. In June 2009 The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs published its consultation on coastal change policy. To inform the policy SEEDA, on behalf of all RDAs, undertook a study to consider the implications of coastal change on businesses and make recommendations on how businesses could be better supported in adapting to coastal change. The consultation is open until 25 September 2009 and can be downloaded at www.defra.gov.uk.

Solent Waterfront Strategy

50. The Solent Waterfront Strategy, commissioned by SEEDA, has been shortlisted for a Royal Town Planning Institute Award. This is in recognition of the importance of the economic evidence base the strategy provides and the difference that it has made in changing policy. The judging panel will be visiting Portsmouth on the 9 July. Winners of the award will be announced in February 2010.

Southampton Airport Presentation

51. On 26 June, [REDACTED] Area Manager presented to the Southampton Airport Stakeholders Group, attended by local residents, businesses and Councillors. Recognising the importance of aviation and aerospace in Hampshire, the presentation focused on the economic benefits of this sector. The event has increased understanding of the importance of the aerospace sector and is aimed at securing partner support to SEEDA's sector development in the sub-region.

Kent and Medway Area Team

Backing Kent Business

52. SEEDA representatives attended Kent County Council's seminar at the House of Commons on 17 June to discuss ways to help businesses through the Recession and prepare for the upturn. SEEDA was invited to the event as we are a member of the Backing Kent Business partnership, which is led and chaired by Kent County Council.
53. The key issues that emerged from the presentations and debate that followed included: the need to work in partnership - public and private sector together; the need to keep the planning system simple to enable housing and other developments to move forward, and consideration of how the benefit systems can be made more flexible to allow people to gradually move back into economic activity after long periods away from the labour market. The discussion concluded in a reception with Caroline Spelman, Shadow Secretary of State for Communities for Local Government.

54. The partnership will follow up with some key messages to MPs and Ministers, and partners will gather case study examples of issues such as the bureaucracy facing businesses, empty property rates, broadband, lorries through Kent, planning and S106 agreements, and business rates.

Sea Change bid in Margate

55. SEEDA has been advising and assisting the Margate Renewal Partnership in its bid for £4m from the Department for Culture Media and Sport Sea Change programme for the first phase of re-developing the former Dreamland site as a heritage amusement Park with restaurants and cinema. The aim is to create a self-supporting visitor attraction with an expected capacity of over 350,000 paying visitors per year. This bid was submitted to DCMS at the end of April 2009. So far the feedback has been positive, although there are issues surrounding the security of the developers' contribution. A decision is expected during July.

Marks & Spencer building, Margate High Street

56. SEEDA has been facilitating discussions to seek an alternative beneficial interim use for the former Marks & Spencer building in Margate High Street, which was acquired by SEEDA on behalf of Thanet District Council. Plans for the building had originally envisaged a retail-led mixed use development, but due to unfavourable market conditions the building was likely to be empty after this Autumn when the Turner Contemporary exhibitions move out. Emerging out of discussions is a proposal for it to be developed as a 'working/learning' hub with Thanet College leading the development of a bid for capital funding from Thanet Works – the working neighbourhood fund. A decision in principle for the funding will be made in August.

Multi Area Agreement

57. The full draft North Kent Multi Area Agreement was submitted to the Communities and Local Government Department on 17 June after intense negotiations with a number of government departments. The submission is now being considered by Ministers and it is hoped that Cabinet clearance will be obtained in early July in time for a signing ceremony before the Summer Recess.
58. The draft Multi Area Agreement (MAA) contains 16 'asks' for flexibilities from Government which focus around three themes – skills and employability; transport and housing; and the cross-cutting issue of integrated approaches to infrastructure investment. In exchange for these 'asks' partners have agreed a set of actions and targets to deliver the benefits of closer collaboration. The six targets focus on: narrowing the GVA gap between North Kent and the South East average; reducing the proportion of working age people on out-of-work benefits; increasing the proportion of working age people with at least National vocational qualifications (NVQ) level 2, and with access to employment by public transport; meeting the net additional homes targets as set out in the SE Plan; and reducing per capita CO2 emissions.
59. The MAA has the potential to change the nature of North Kent's relationship with Whitehall departments and their Agencies, for example by bringing funding streams together and aligning them with N Kent plans. One of the specific 'asks' which seeks to achieve this is for North Kent to become a priority area for a 'single conversation' with Homes and Communities Agency and agree a local investment plan by the end of 2009.

60. Both SEEDA and local partners are pleased with the draft MAA, but nevertheless acknowledge that many of the 'asks' are process-related and will not in themselves deliver tangible benefits to North Kent at this stage. Partners understand that continued commitment and resource is required to realise the potential offered by the MAA to deliver real benefits for North Kent and that the signing of the MAA represents a stage on this journey.

Sussex Area Team

Gatwick Diamond

61. The Gatwick Diamond, a business-led public private partnership on which SEEDA is well represented through the Area Team, has developed a detailed business plan which will support the delivery of the ambitious Gatwick Diamond Future Plan.
62. A Statement of Intent which proposed the creation of a University Centre in Crawley was submitted to the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) by the University of Brighton on behalf of a partnership which comprised SEEDA, Crawley Borough Council, West Sussex County Council and Central Sussex College. It is anticipated that HEFCE will provide some initial feedback on the proposal in August 09.

West Sussex

63. The area team is working closely with West Sussex County Council to consider a new model for the sub-regional partnership. This model will recognize the West Sussex Economic Skills and Enterprise Board as the sub regional partnership and will enable SEEDA funding to be directed towards the business led Boards of the Gatwick Diamond and the Coastal West Sussex Partnership. SEEDA's financial contribution to the Gatwick Diamond will match that of the eight Local Authorities and will be used to develop joint investment planning, take forward key priorities in Future Plan, and target areas where investment will make a difference: innovation, key sectors and international markets.
64. We are working with partners to ensure the Coastal West Sussex Partnership is a dynamic private / public sector alliance, capable of driving sustainable economic development and growth. In particular ensuring investments in education and skills in this part of the coast are jointly planned and result in a coherent offer to business and the community.

Innovation and Growth Teams

65. The Area Teams continue to work closely with the Partnerships to resolve any issues and to develop creative, business focused plans that meet the requirements set by SEEDA.

Brighton and Hove

66. Preston Barracks - beyond our original investment in purchasing the site it is not expected that SEEDA will invest in the development. However, we are working closely with Brighton and Hove City Council and other partners to ensure this development supports the strategic priorities for education and skills across the city.

Milton Keynes, Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Area Team

Stoke Mandeville, Buckinghamshire – National Spinal Injuries Centre

67. SEEDA helped convene a high level workshop to discuss opportunities for joint working on collaborative research and design around assisted living/telecare and healthcare technologies and ongoing patient aftercare service delivery, with a view to future commercialisation opportunities.
68. The key focus for this workshop was to explore whether there are opportunities for Stoke Mandeville's spinal injury centre and its clinicians to support the development of a local healthcare cluster. There was a clear willingness to engage, bringing Stoke Mandeville in touch with appropriate forms of business support and relevant businesses to take forward growth and innovation agendas. The potential for an Assisted Living science and innovation campus with a specialised 'niche' focus with an opportunity for technology demonstrators is being progressed. Local partners are pursuing this with South East Health Technologies Alliance - the sector consortia for businesses in the health technologies sector covering pharmaceuticals, biotechnology, medical devices, and diagnostics.