

## **SOUTH EAST ENGLAND DEVELOPMENT AGENCY**

### **BOARD MEETING ON 26 MARCH 2009**

#### **ITEM 5**

### **IMPLEMENTING THE SUB NATIONAL REVIEW**

#### **Recommendation**

The Board is invited to **AGREE** the nominations to the South East England Partnership Board and Strategy Board and **NOTES** the arrangements for implementing the new arrangements.

#### **Context**

1. There is now agreement in the region on the key elements of the regional structure required to implement the Sub National Review. The new structure will take forward the joint (statutory) duty on SEEDA and the South East Leaders' Board to prepare the Regional Strategy. The preparation of an implementation plan that supports the Regional Strategy (the Regional Delivery Plan) is also a statutory requirement.
2. The new structure (Annex 1) consists of:
  - The South East England Partnership Board (chaired by SEEDA) comprising 4 SEEDA Board members and 8 representatives from the South East England Leaders' Board.
  - The Strategy Board (chaired by South East England Leaders' Board) comprising 4 SEEDA Board members and 8 representatives from the South East England Leaders' Board. In addition, 2 stakeholder representatives and 4 representatives from 'delivery agencies' will be invited to join the Strategy Board as observers.
3. The Partnership and Strategy Boards will be supported by a number of Delivery Boards and/or Working Groups. These will include the Regional Transport Board, the Regional Housing and Regeneration Board and the new Economic Development and Skills Board.
4. A small working group – comprising representatives from SEEDA Board, South East England Leaders' Board, stakeholders and delivery agencies – has been established to review current working arrangements for the Delivery Boards and Working Groups. It will also consider the nature of the working relationship between the Strategy Board and the Delivery Boards/Working Groups. Alex Pratt and Pam Charwood are representing the SEEDA Board on this group which will develop proposals for consideration by the Partnership Board. The ambition is for the new working arrangements to be in effect no later than the early summer 2009.

## **Next Steps**

5. The region is required to submit a progress report on the implementation of the Sub National Review to the Government by the end of March 2009. The Assembly secretariat is preparing this report in partnership with the SEEDA Executive. This follows on from the approval of the proposed structure by the SEEDA Board and South East England Councils at their respective meetings in February.
6. Agreement having been reached on the proposed regional structure, the Regional Assembly resolved at its meeting on 4 March to dissolve with effect from 31 March 2009.
7. This means, subject to confirmation by the Government, the new regional governance arrangements will come into effect from 1 April 2009. The arrangements will be interim pending the legislation required to enact the Sub National Review; this is expected to happen in summer 2009.
8. Moving to the interim arrangements now provides clarity on the way forward for the region, and in particular the technical team that exists at the regional level the retention of which has been an objective of all concerned right from the start of the SNR debate. The fact that the arrangements will be interim gives us the flexibility to refine them in light of experience.
9. The Regional Assembly is the designated Regional Planning Body (under the terms of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004). Until such time as the enactment of the legislation being considered by Parliament there remains a need for there to be a designated Regional Planning Body.
10. Therefore with the dissolution of the Regional Assembly there is the need to transfer the Regional Planning Body designation to the South East England Partnership Board. The Chairman of SEEDA and Chairman of the South East England Leaders' Board have written to the Secretary of State requesting that this take place with effect from 1 April 2009.
11. As a consequence of the requirement to designate the Partnership Board as the RPB the SEEDA Board nominees to that Board cannot be representatives from Local Government; this is because at least one-third of the RPB must be non-Local Authority.

## **Nominations to the Partnership and Strategy Boards**

12. The South East England Partnership Board will be responsible for commissioning and signing-off the Regional Strategy, and its associated implementation plan. It will be chaired by the SEEDA Board Chairman. It is anticipated that it will only meet at key milestones in the process.
13. There will be four SEEDA Board members on the South East England Partnership Board. Subject to discussion with the individual Board members it is proposed that these are as follows:
  - Jim Brathwaite (who will chair the Partnership Board)

- Keith Riley
- Zenna Atkins
- Dolores Byrne

14. The Strategy Board will be chaired by the South East England Leaders' Board. It will meet regularly and will deal with substantive matters associated with the preparation of the Regional Strategy and its associated implementation plan. It will also provide oversight on the work of the Delivery Boards and Working Groups.

15. There will be four SEEDA Board members on the Strategy Board. Subject to discussion with the individual Board members it is proposed that these are as follows:

- Cllr Keith Mitchell
- Alex Pratt
- Les Dawson
- Pam Charlwood

16. An Executive Steering Group will be established – comprising initially the SEEDA Chief Executive, the lead Chief Executive for the local authorities and the Interim Managing Director for SEERA Ltd. This will oversee the technical programme of work associated with the Regional Strategy and its implementation plan.

17. While the details of the working arrangements for the delivery boards are being finalised, there is a commitment for the Regional Transport Board and the Regional Housing and Regeneration Board to continue in the current form for the time being; this reflects the need to maintain momentum with delivery in the region during the current recession.

18. It is proposed that the SEEDA Board representatives on the delivery boards continue to be:

- Bob Goldfield – Regional Transport Board
- Imtiaz Farookhi – Regional Housing and Regeneration Board

19. In addition to the existing delivery boards the new governance arrangements will result in the establishment of a new Economic Development and Skills Board.

20. Details of the new delivery board are being worked up by the working group referred to in paragraph 4 above. It is anticipated that this new delivery board will convene for the first time in summer 2009 and that, in keeping with the other delivery boards, the SEEDA Board will have a representative on it.

21. The establishment of the new governance arrangements will increase the direct involvement of the SEEDA Board members in the development of the regional policy framework. There will also be implications for the SEEDA Executive and how the agency operates. The Implementation Group work stream on Governance and Committees is taking this forward.

## **Leadership on Delivery and Implementation**

22. Reference has already been made to the statutory requirement to prepare an implementation plan (the Regional Delivery Plan) in support of the Regional Strategy. We were committed to the preparation of the Regional Delivery Plan, as a means of bringing together our work on implementation with that of the Assembly, prior to the publication of the SNR.
23. We already have enhanced our joint working arrangements in this regard through the secondment of Martin Tugwell (the Assembly's Director of Development) to SEEDA. He has led the region's work on preparing the Regional Funding Advice drawing on input from SEEDA and the Assembly and other delivery agencies.
24. We need to develop the region's capability on implementation and delivery further. The secondment has brought tangible benefits in terms of improving the alignment of funding priorities, as demonstrated in our Regional Funding Advice. It is proposed that we build upon this success in taking forward the new working arrangements.
25. It is proposed the technical leadership on the preparation of the Regional Delivery Plan, and its implementation through the Delivery Boards, is provided from within the SEEDA Executive. There would continue to be a need to work with a wide variety of agencies and organisations in order to achieve delivery on the ground. This arrangement would enable the work of the delivery boards to be co-ordinated more effectively in support the Partnership and Strategy Boards.
26. The practical implications of this are that Martin Tugwell's secondment to SEEDA is likely to be extended. He would lead a small team located within the Strategy and Communications Directorate, the core membership of which will be drawn from the SEEDA Executive and secondees from SEERA Ltd. Secondments of SEERA Ltd employees would be on the basis that their salaries continue to be paid from the CLG grant that pays for regional planning.
27. Some of this activity will be new to SEEDA, although some will build upon arrangements already in place, for briefing and preparing SEEDA Board members to operate within Regional-level Committees. Taken together with the re-planning of budgets and activity for 2009-11 and the work re-focussing the agency to better meet the demands of changed economic circumstances, this will mean some change to the internal workings of the agency, to improve internal reporting and scrutiny of activities and introduce an enhanced system of assurance and monitoring of operations. This will be the subject of a paper to SEEDA Board at its April meeting.

## **Communication Implications**

28. The establishment of the regional structure required to take forward the preparation of the Regional Strategy is a significant step in terms of implementing the Sub National Review. It represents a major opportunity to highlight the strength of partnership working in the region.

29. Developing the region's capability on delivery and implementation is critical to us delivering sustainable economic development. The work of the delivery boards has in the past attracted considerable interest from the technical media, as well as general media coverage when dealing with specific proposals.

# Regional Strategy: Proposal for Governance Arrangements in the South East

(Working Model – 11 March 2009)

