

South East England Regional Assembly Economy Advisory Group

Notes of the meeting held on 14 December 2004

Present:

Alistair Robson - CHAIR	East Sussex CC
Eike Muller	GOSE
Graham Tuck	Eastleigh BC
John Shapley	Buckinghamshire CC
Paul Lovejoy	SEEDA
Roger Lawes	Hampshire CC
Ross McNally	South East Chambers of Commerce
Sue Cooper	West Sussex CC
Tim Martin	Kent CC
Tony Spruth	Wycombe DC
Ray Bowers	South East England Regional Assembly
Nikki Nicholson	South East England Regional Assembly
Nick Woolfenden	South East England Regional Assembly
Catherine Rose	South East England Regional Assembly

1. Introduction and Apologies

Apologies for Absence

Barry Deller	ACTVaR
Brenda Pollack	SEFS
Jane Fletcher	SEFS
Mick Dunford	Sussex University
Nigel Welbourne	GOSE

Alistair welcomed Paul Lovejoy who has replaced Rashid Bashir.

2. Notes of the previous meeting held on 8th October 2004

No comments

3. Draft South East Plan

Ray advised that the Assembly agreed the South East Plan for consultation at the Plenary meeting on 29th November. Subsequent amendments were agreed at RPC on 8th December and RPC will meet again on 22nd December to agree the Spatial Options. The consultation launch date has been deferred by one week and the consultation period is from mid January to mid April. All advisory groups need to spend the next few months firming up the policies and evidence base.

Comments were raised on the balance between economy and tourism policies. The tourism policies have been included for information only. Revisions were made to

policy REI following the plenary on 29th November and have been circulated with these minutes.

4. Future Employment Trends

Nick summarised current work being carried out on employment trends. A briefing paper on current trends in growth in the regional economy, future economic and employment changes and factors influencing future changes has been drafted.

- **Assembly to circulate briefing paper on labour supply and demand change in South East England when finalised**

The final report on offshoring has been produced and is available on the Assembly website. The CBI conference discussed offshoring and a survey of their members highlighted the pressure many companies were under to relocate parts of their businesses abroad. The CBI argue that the benefits outweigh the drawbacks.

Advice is needed on how to deal with offshoring in the South East. It is a long term trend and careful thought is needed on its impacts. There is a need to develop a competitive response to offshoring and see it as an opportunity to reinvigorate local economies. Western Corridor firms are more susceptible to off-shoring in the future and so this region could be used as a testing area for further research.

- **EAG members to discuss implications of offshoring at EAG brainstorming session on 12th January**

5. Spatial Requirements of Key Sectors in the South East - Atkins Research

Research by Atkins has reviewed the spatial and land-use requirements of the key sectors in the South East. Final comments are being fed back to Atkins and the report will be signed off before Christmas. EAG need to look at the recommendations and to feed this into the South East Plan. It was agreed that a task group should meet to discuss the findings.

- **Ross McNally, Tim Martin, Greg Ward and the Assembly to discuss findings of Atkins research.**

6. Further Research

SEEDA Research

SEEDA are carrying out work to respond to the consultation draft of the South East Plan and for the review of the RES:

- Commissioned Deloitte's to unpack the concept of Smart Growth and consider its implications for the South East economy;
- Working with the LSCs to quantify skills needs and identify skills supply infrastructure requirements; and

- Identifying some questions to apply as regional economic tests to the Plan including what the proposals mean in terms of their impact on regional economic policy, affordable housing and kind/scale of labour supply at a regional and sub-regional level.
- **Brief for further research on Smart Growth to be circulated to sub-regions when available**

Learning and Skills

Further work will be carried out on the quantification of the skills needs for each sub-region and the spatial requirements to meet the needs.

Provision of Employment Land

Further work is required on policies on supply of employment land at both a regional level and in the sub-regional strategies. Members suggested that a brainstorming session was needed to discuss the style of the policies that should be drafted and the evidence base collated. The session will be held at 2:00 on 12th January and a briefing note for the session is being circulated with these minutes.

7. AOB

DTZ have now completed their work on the need for retail development in South East England and details can be found on the Assemblies website.

8. Date of Next Meeting

Brainstorming session on Wednesday 12 January 2005, 2pm at Berkeley House.