

**SOUTH EAST ENGLAND REGIONAL ASSEMBLY
POLICY ADVISORY GROUP**

Note of Meeting
5 November 2004

Present:	Trish Haines	Reading Borough Council
	Paul Bevan	South East England Regional Assembly
	Heather Bolton	South East England Regional Assembly
	Philip Craig	South East England Regional Assembly
	Barry Deller	ACTVAR
	Sean Holt	Sports England
	Helen Jackson	SEMLAC
	Chris Lawrence-Pietroni	South East Counties
	Karen Mann	Hampshire County Council
	Nigel Rose	South East Forum for Sustainability
	Debbie Wain	South East Regeneration Network
	Megan McKibbin	Kent and Medway Economic Board
	Roger Vickerman	University of Kent
	Nick Wolfenden	South East England Regional Assembly

1. Minutes of the Last Meeting

- 1.1 The minutes of the last meeting held on 28 September 2004 were agreed. There were no matters arising not otherwise on the Agenda.

2. The South East Plan - Statement of Public Consultation Feedback

- 2.1 Recent guidance from Government (i.e. the final version of PPS11) sets out the their expectations of Regional Planning Bodies (RPB) in respect of partnership working and community involvement. It cites examples of good practice and urges RPB to be creative in engaging communities and the public in the Plan preparation process.
- 2.2 Government expects the Assembly to consider who it needs to involve, and to work with local authorities and local strategic partnerships (LSPs) to identify and reach these groups. The Statement of Public Participation (SPP) should be drawn up in consultation with the Government Office and with reference to others

with recent experience of major exercises in community involvement (hence the advice sought of PAG). The SPP should:

- explain how and when the RPB intends to involve the public;
- identify who the RPB's main partners will be and how it intends to work with them;
- be an integral part of the project plan,

- 2.3 Although our commencement of the South East Plan preparation ahead of the finalisation of PPS1 I has meant that we have not been able fully to follow some of its detailed recommendations our view is that the requirements are well covered.
- 2.4 Much of the debate around the guidance centred on whether the Assembly should produce a public questionnaire inviting views on the Plan. Much technical advice against the questionnaire was balanced by elected councillors' desire to give everyone in the region the opportunity to provide their views on the South East Plan.
- 2.5 The group identified opportunities to use existing points of contacts with the public. It was agreed that the role of local authorities in this is critical as there is no way we will be able to meet the expectations that we and others have to engage public opinion without the active and constructive partnership of them. A discussion followed on the draft questionnaire to households and the practical means to ensure that the principal local authorities - counties and unitaries - work with the Assembly us on this agenda,

3. The South East Plan – Developing the Social Chapter

- 3.1 The South East Plan will set out a vision for the region through to 2026 and focus on improvements needed to ensure the region remains economically successful and an attractive place to live. Previous meetings of the group have highlighted the social challenges facing the region and suggested the spatial options and policies needed to address them.
- 3.2 Members were presented with the paper going to the regional planning committee on 8 November and asked for their comments. Specific changes were suggested to the text (which were then added to the paper distributed to the regional planning committee). In addition members were keen to stress that the South East Plan must be realistic about the extent of its capacity to influence activities outside its main sphere of influence. To influence social, cultural and health issues in the region, and ensure effective implementation, the Plan must ensure the most effective co-ordination of the contributions of the various stakeholders, working in partnership to ensure:

- That social, cultural and health infrastructure keeps pace with development and population growth
- Strong and inclusive partnership with relevant statutory authorities, with reference to professional standards, to co-ordinate development
- That development takes account of the regional, sub regional and local context in which it takes place

4. Scrutiny of SEEDA – Regeneration

- 4.1 The Assembly routinely scrutinises the policies and programmes of SEEDA and their ability to deliver the outcomes envisaged in the Regional Economic Strategy. The final scrutiny of SEEDA in 2005 will examine their approach to regeneration, including the Single Regeneration Budget (SRB) and the development of Area Investment Frameworks (AIFs). Key issues raised included confusion about the role of AIFs to many at a local and sub-regional level, engagement and governance across sectors and the current balance of community versus economic development.

5. Date of the next meeting

- 5.1 The next meeting of the Policy Advisory Group will be 21 February 2005 at the Assembly Offices.