

**SOUTH EAST ENGLAND REGIONAL ASSEMBLY
STRATEGY ADVISORY GROUP
6 April 2006**

Note of Meeting

Present:

Martin Tugwell	South East England Regional Assembly (Chairman)
Catriona Riddell	South East England Regional Assembly
David Payne	South East England Regional Assembly
Dawn Brown	South East England Regional Assembly
Philip Craig	South East England Regional Assembly
Claire Hamilton	South East England Regional Assembly
Alistair Robson	East Sussex County Council (Chair EAG)
Chris Cousins	Oxfordshire County Council
Darren Richards	GOSE
Edward Dawson	RAISE
Howard Davidson	Environment Agency (Chair NRCCAG)
Michael Crofton-Briggs	Oxford City Council (POS)
Mike Gill	GOSE
Stephen Thwaites	Waverley Borough Council (POS)
Stuart Hylton	Joint Strategic Planning Unit (Berkshire)

I. Apologies and Substitutions

Alison Quant	Hampshire County Council
John Pounder	South East England Regional Assembly
Catherine Johnstone	RAISE
Chris Corrigan	SEFS
David Hackforth	Milton Keynes Council
Douglas Horner	CBI
Huw Jones	Buckinghamshire County Council
John Kilford	West Sussex County Council (Chair SEERAWP)
Leigh Herington	Kent County Council (Chair HAG)
Lindsay Frost	Lewes District Council (POS)
Paul Hudson	SEEDA
Pete Raine	Kent County Council (Chair SERTAB)
Tony Curtis	Basingstoke & Dene Borough Council (POS) (Chair Cross-Cutting)
Trevor Gasson	Maidstone Borough Council

The Chairman welcomed Catriona Riddell, recently appointed as Planning Strategy Director for the Assembly, Michael Crofton-Briggs who is currently Head of Planning at Oxford City Council, Philip Craig, Head of Policy and his colleague Claire Hamilton.

2. Notes of Meeting on 9 January 2006 /Matters Arising

Item 7b – Planning Gain Supplement

b) Consultation on Planning Gain Supplement

In her review, Kate Barker proposed that infrastructure should be funded through a new charge on planning provision. Even though the proposed Planning Gain Supplement will need further consideration, it is the most positive attempt to address the infrastructure problem. The introduction of the PGS however should be clarified in order to avoid confusion.

There was a general consensus in the Group in support of PGS.

It was **AGREED** that the last sentence in paragraph 7b would be deleted.

c) PPS25

David Payne made members aware that a response had been sent which agreed to PPS25 in principal but at the same time requested that more detail and clarity was needed than what is offered by the current guidelines.

Action: A copy of the PPS25 response to be circulated to the Strategy Advisory Group.

The notes of the meeting held on 9 January 2006 were agreed.

3. Matters Arising Not Elsewhere on the Agenda

Regional Housing Board

The Chairman confirmed that a letter had been received from David Milliband confirming the transfer of responsibility to the Assembly no later than September 2006. However, in practice this will take effect from 2 May 2006 to coincide with the next meeting of the Regional Housing Board which the Assembly will Chair.

4. South East Plan

a) Examination in Public

Catriona Riddell referred to the timetable which had been circulated to the group in advance of the meeting. One addition was the 2nd pre meet which would take place on 17th October 2006. Although the consultation period is now in progress the Panel web site currently shows as being 'under construction' and it had not been possible to contact the Panel by phone at the current time.

Catriona Riddell reported that a meeting had taken place on 5th April with the East of England Regional Assembly which had raised a number of questions on process, which would be raised with the Panel.

Stuart Hylton from Berkshire reported that he had not yet received any copies of the Plan. Stuart Hylton to advise the Assembly if the copies are not received within the next few days.

From a GOSE perspective, Darren Richards informed members that he understood that the Panel had arranged for the work to analyse the consultation responses to be contracted out. He also advised that the piece of work commissioned by the Government on the potential distribution of higher housing figures would be published in early May.

There were concerns voiced about the timing of the consultation, specifically the fact that purdah for the local elections fell during the consultation period. Both GOSE and the Assembly advised that there was sufficient time after the elections in order for local authorities to respond to the consultation.

With regards to water quality and resources – this work will be reported at the next meeting of the Regional Planning Committee.

Action: The Terms of Reference for the Augmentation Evidence Base to be provided by Darren Richards and attached to the minutes from this meeting.

b) Brainstorming on Potential Issues for EIP

Various discussions took place on issues that may be of potential interest to the Panel. Amongst the issues raised was how the Panel might tackle areas such as infrastructure and how this could be implemented. It was felt that the Panel would probably need to take a global perspective, taking care to pick up on any new regulations that would be coming into force.

Stuart Hylton raised the issue of delivery of affordable housing which is a separate item from the infrastructure debate, as it raised issues more of a financial nature. The Chairman confirmed that Cath Stubbings would keep Stuart in touch with progress on this front through the Regional Housing Board.

c) Sustainability Appraisal

The Chairman referred to the 3 recommendations made in the Report. Discussions will be held with the Consultants to determine how their findings can be incorporated into the preparation of the refined Implementation Plan, picking up any cross cutting policies. It was acknowledged that there is a need to ensure that the many aspects of the climate change within the policy framework are made clearer.

Thames Basin Heaths

David Payne explained that liaison with English Nature and ODPM is ongoing (ODPM have provided some funding) to address the particular problems faced with this SPA. It will be a case of reaching a pragmatic agreement on future housing and exclusion zones. The Chairman confirmed that the work will involve dialogue with local Stakeholders and Government. He also confirmed that the Regional Planning Committee would continue to be informed of progress on this issue.

5. Implementation Plan

The Chairman confirmed that the revised report has been submitted, however the overall document is still 'work in progress' and an update will be prepared prior to the Examination in Public, as there are some gaps in the information which need to be completed.

A report is due to be published from SQW which will set out how decisions are reached in relation to funding in a number of other areas of public sector investment. This will assist in the development of the Implementation Plan.

6. Planning Gain Supplement

The Chairman referred to the response letter sent to the HM Treasury, which was welcomed. As a consequence the Assembly had been invited into discussions with ODPM. The budget statement seemed to indicate that Ministers are intending to go down the PGS route.

At the meeting with ODPM there were 3 key questions about PGS, namely:

- What would be the most effective way of collecting monies? (The Assembly's view remains that this was best done locally as this would then instil public confidence).
- How the resources be distributed within each region in order to address strategic investment issues.
- Leadership – there is a need to ensure that the PGS approach does not lose the link between development and investment in the local area.

These points are to be discussed with the Leadership Group on Friday 7 April 2006.

There was a positive response from members on the Hewden Report, which will be circulated wider by STAG members as appropriate.

7. Barker Review of Land Use Planning

The Chairman referred members to the response letter that was sent to the Barker Review Team on 24 March 2006.

8. Comprehensive Spending Review

Philip Craig gave an in depth verbal update as given below:

Spending Reviews aim to set out the government's spending plans for the next three years. The Comprehensive Spending Review in 2007 will set departmental spending plans and priorities for the years 2008-09, 2009-10 and 2010-11.

The review announced for 2007 will be the second Comprehensive Spending Review. With the 2007 Review coming a decade after the first CSR, the Government sees it as an opportunity to do a fundamental review of the balance and pattern of public expenditure, take stock of what investments and reforms have delivered to date and identify what further steps are needed to meet the challenges decade ahead. It will assess what investments and reforms are needed to equip the UK to respond to the global challenges of the decade ahead.

To lay the groundwork for the CSR, the Government is taking forward a programme of work over the next year involving:

- A An examination of the key long-term trends and challenges that will shape the next decade –
1. **Demographic and socio-economic change**, such as the rapid increase in the old age dependency ratio as the 'baby boom' generation reaches retirement age
 2. The intensification of **cross-border economic competition** as the balance of international economic activity shifts toward rapidly growing emerging markets such as China and India
 3. The acceleration in the **pace of innovation and technological diffusion** and a continued increase in the knowledge-intensity of goods and services
 4. Continued **global uncertainty and poverty**, with ongoing threats of international terrorism and global conflict
 5. Increasing **pressures on our natural resources and global climate** from rapid economic and population growth in the developing world and sustained demand for fossil fuels in advanced economies.
- B Detailed studies of key areas where cross-cutting, innovative policy responses are required to meet these long-term challenges
- A number of reviews are already underway. For example, the **Eddington Transport Study** is reviewing the long-term impact of transport decisions on economic productivity, stability and growth.
 - The **Leitch Review of Skills** will set out the skills profile that the UK should aim to achieve in 2020 in order to maximise productivity and growth over the long term.

- A review of the **effectiveness of sub national interventions on economic development** and the regeneration and renewal of deprived neighbourhoods and building on the recommendations of Kate Barker's independent review of housing supply.
- The 2005 Pre-Budget Report announced a **review of how planning policy can better deliver economic growth** and prosperity alongside other sustainable development goals

C A far-reaching value for money programme to release the resources needed to address the challenges, involving both further development of the efficiency areas developed in the Gershon Review, including:

1. Deepening the government-wide efficiency programme in the operational areas established by the Gershon Review (i.e. collaboration in procurement and the shared provision of corporate services to government departments and the wider public sector)
2. A set of zero-based reviews of departments' baseline expenditure
3. Reviewing the opportunities for transforming service delivery across government, looking at how the channels through which services are delivered can be made more efficient and responsive to the needs of users

9. Any other Business

None.

10. Date of Next Meeting

Members will be canvassed for dates within the next few days.

The meeting closed at 16.10 hrs.