

### **SOUTH EAST ENGLAND REGIONAL ASSEMBLY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMITTEE**

Date: 6 March 2001

Subject: **Milton Keynes and South Midlands Study**

Report of: Director of Planning and Transport

**Recommendation: That the Committee agree to contribute £10,000 towards the cost of the study and nominate two Members to be on the Member Reference Group**

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#### **I Introduction**

- 1.1 The November Committee received and approved a report setting out the terms of reference for a major new study of the Regional Growth Area identified in Regional Planning Guidance for Milton Keynes and the South Midlands.
- 1.2 The Brief has now been adopted and consultants have been invited to tender for the work. Given the necessary European Commission and other procedures, we envisage that consultants will be appointed in June this year. The study will then be timetabled for completion by September 2002.
- 1.3 Two specific matters now need the Committee's approval. The first is the matter of a financial contribution. It has been suggested that SEERA make a contribution of £10,000 spread over two financial years, towards the overall costs of the study. As this is one of the Region's proposed major growth areas and a similar level of contribution was similarly agreed for the Ashford Study, I recommend that such a contribution is agreed and drawn from our consultancy budget.
- 1.4 Secondly, the agreed brief makes provision for a Members' Reference Group, which will comprise two elected representatives from each of the three Regional Planning Bodies. The Reference Group is intended to act as a means of sounding out elected members on the emerging output of the Study rather than as a mechanism for making formal decisions about the outcome. The latter will be for consideration by the full Regional Planning Committee and indeed the Assembly, in due course. The Member Reference Group will receive reports from the Project Steering Group, (chaired by this Assembly's Director of Planning and Transport) when key stages are reached.

- 1.5 Although the first meeting of the Member Group will probably not take place until late in the summer after the consultants have been appointed and begun their work, it would nevertheless now be appropriate to agree this Committee's nominations to the Member Reference Group. Members may consider it appropriate that one of the members is drawn from the area of the region covered by the Study, whilst the other one is drawn from elsewhere in the region.

**Mike Gwilliam**  
**Director of Planning and Transport**  
**26 February 2001**