

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

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING ON 25 JULY 2007**

Present:

Members

Cllr Mrs Mary Ballin  
Cllr Paul Clokie OBE  
Cllr Janet Duncton  
Mr Alan Durrant  
Cllr Miss Moira Gibson  
Cllr Jonathan Glen  
Mr Robert Hamlin  
Mr Ian Hepburn  
Mr Douglas Horner  
Mr Tim Lockwood  
Cllr Dr Royce Longton  
Cllr Alan Lovell  
Cllr Keith Mann  
Cllr David Munro  
Rev Dr Derek Overfield  
Cllr Jerry Patterson  
Cllr Peter Pragnell  
Cllr Tony Reid

Officers

Catriona Riddell  
Martin Tugwell  
Heather Bolton  
Diana Pogson  
David Payne  
Louise Wilby  
Cath Rose  
James Renwick  
Lesley van Dijk  
Jo Shockley  
Mark Williams  
Steve Baker  
Katie Brett  
Fiona Thorp

In Attendance

Paul Lovejoy (SEEDA)  
Tim Stansfeld (SEEDA)  
Howard Ewing (GOSE)  
Odette Cousin (APSU)  
Mr Edward Dawson  
Ms Sarah Lavery  
Mr Nigel Pye

Douglas Horner drew to the attention of the Committee his declaration of interest registered with the Regional Assembly secretariat.

**I. Election of Chairman and Election of Vice-Chairman**

Cllr Moira Gibson was unanimously elected as Chairman.

There were two nominations for Vice Chairman, Ian Hepburn and Cllr Jerry Patterson. Ian Hepburn was elected as Vice-Chairman.

**Nominations for Memberships of Sub-groups:**

The following nominations were received:

**LDD Conformity**

Conservative: Cllr Miss Moira Gibson  
Liberal Democrat: Mr Ian Beardsmore  
Economic Partner: Mr Tim Lockwood  
Social and Environmental Partner: To be confirmed

## **Major Planning Applications**

Conservative: Cllr Tony Reid

Liberal Democrat: Cllr Jerry Patterson

Economic Partner: Ms Judith Corcho

Social and Environmental Partner: Rev Dr Derek Overfield

## **Gypsies and Travellers**

Conservative: Cllr David Munro

Liberal Democrat: Cllr Dr Royce Longton

Economic Partner: Mr Alan Durrant

Social and Environmental Partner: To be confirmed

## **Inter-regional Forum**

Economic Partner: Mr Tim Lockwood

Social and Environmental Partner: Mr Robert Hamlin

## **2. Apologies and Substitutions**

- 2.1 Apologies were received from Judith Corcho, Brian Horsley, Cllr Keith House and Cllr Martin Tett.
- 2.2 The Chairman welcomed new members Ms Judith Corcho, Cllr Mrs Claire Denman, Cllr Janet Duncton, Mr Alan Durrant, Mr Brian Horsely and Cllr Peter Pragnell.
- 2.3 Ian Hepburn asked about the rules of procedure governing substitutions for Social and Environmental Partners (SEP)s. The Chairman **AGREED** to seek clarification, from the Constitution, for the next meeting. It was **NOTED** that for the purpose of this meeting Edward Dawson was an observer and, therefore, was able to participate in the debate but was not allowed to vote.
- 2.4 Ian Hepburn expressed concern that a full complement of SEPs would be restricted if the rules of procedure were interpreted in the way they currently appear to be.

## **3. Minutes of the Meeting Held on 23 May 2007**

The Minutes were **AGREED** with the following amendments.

- 3.1 Para 2.3  
The last sentence should read Robert Hamlin recorded his thanks to present and former staff. This was endorsed by Ian Hepburn.
- 3.2 Para 3.2  
A typing error to be corrected (new text in bold) so that it reads:  
'The key issue for the Assembly was likely to be the government's proposals in relations to major infrastructure projects, particularly the proposal to establish an independent Infrastructure Commission to make decisions on nationally important proposals, such as power stations **and national** road/rail proposals.'

- 3.3 Para 4.3  
A copy of the slide presentation will be forwarded to the Committee with the minutes of this meeting.
- 3.4 Para 5.3  
Ian Hepburn requested an additional sentence after para 5.3. The additional wording was **AGREED** as follows:
- 3.5 It was **AGREED** that officers would draft additional text requiring UK contributions to CO2 emissions from international shipping and aviation to be included in Government targets. This had subsequently been included in the response to the Draft Transport Bill.
- 3.6 Para 7  
Cllr Jonathan Glen proposed an amendment, which was tabled at the meeting, to insert the following text, "The Committee **NOTED** that Jonathan Glen and Keith Mann were opposed to the Aggregates Apportionment figures as they currently stand."
- The amendment was **AGREED**.
- 3.7 Para 7  
A question was asked about the suitability of the word 'noted' in the opening sentence. 'The Committee **NOTED** the following recommendations:'
- 3.8 The Director of Planning explained that the recommendations had been noted because the consultation response had been forwarded to GOSE to be amended.

#### **4. Matters Arising Not Elsewhere on the Agenda**

- 4.1 Para 2.4  
Robert Hamlin expressed concern that the Regional Planning Committee (RPC) had not endorsed the DTZ Report on Housing Size and Type and, therefore, it should not have been included in the Annual Report.
- 4.2 The Chairman acknowledged that this principle was accepted for the consideration of future issues and advised that reports which were to be noted only, would be recorded accurately.
- 4.3 The Director of Planning explained that the research was carried out by independent consultants and that a detailed report was presented to the RPC on 21 March 2007 and that an action plan will be included in the agenda for the meeting of the RPC on 26 September 2007.
- 4.4 The Director of Development indicated that evidence from the research was used to support the work of the Assembly. The recommendations arising out of the evidence will be brought to the RPC. He cited the example of the need to make a strong case to Government to build more family sized homes. The implications will be discussed by the RPC and Regional Housing Board (RHB).

#### **Sub-national Review**

- 4.5 The Director of Planning provided a verbal update on the planning functions issues arising out of the review.
- 4.6 She referred to the newly published Housing Green Paper and suggested an imminent joint meeting with the RHB to discuss the implications of both this and the Panel's report on the EiP.
- 4.7 The review proposed the transfer of the Regional Assembly's planning function to the Regional Development Agency (RDA). The proposal to combine the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) with the Regional Economic Strategy (RES) raised questions about its likely shape and how parts of the new integrated RSS might be tested.
- 4.8 She advised that GOSE is from this process committed to the imminent publication of the Panel's report and it is hoped that the process through to final publication of the plan will be speedily completed. The Assembly is committed to collecting evidence for the first review from the beginning of 2008 to update various policies. Consideration will need to be given to how this work fits with work on the Integrated Regional Strategy (IRS) proposed in the SNR and the proposal in the Housing Green Paper for the partial/full review of all RSS by 2011.
- 4.9 The Director of Planning stated the importance of staff retention to address the three year work programme and acknowledged the challenging timescale, arising from the need for legislation to transfer executive powers to the RDA by 2010.
- 4.10 The Assembly will seek clarity from the Government as to whether it will be required to start work on an IRS, or to review the current South East Plan and start an IRSS in 2010. She assured the Committee that, regardless of what is proposed, the Assembly remained committed to continuing close working with the RDA to collect evidence in the interim period.
- 4.11 Douglas Horner advised that the CBI endorsed the need to achieve the best decision making process which will be served best by shaping and guiding the IRS up to the point of transfer. It was noted that the Assembly is currently well placed to ensure this, having the necessary function, resources and power. The Committee fully supported this view.
- 4.12 Ian Hepburn advised that the Policy and Executive Committee of the SEPs was committed to supporting the Assembly's ongoing work.
- 4.13 The Director of Development noted that the Sub-national Review provided an opportunity to build on the last six years' work with SEEDA to ensure the best possible outcomes for the region.

## **5. Thames Basin Heaths: Next Steps**

- 5.1 The Planning Manager provided an overview of the context and key issues outlined in his report.
- 5.2 He reported that consultation with local authorities and other stakeholders was ongoing and a meeting, with local authorities, to consider the way forward, had taken place on 25 June 2007.

- 5.3 The Interim Strategic Delivery Plan (ISDP) will co-ordinate the work of local authorities avoiding duplication and addressing the issues of the Assessor's Report especially those not included in Natural England's Draft Delivery Plan. Clusters of local authorities working on Special Protection Areas (SPA)s will be invited to attend.
- 5.4 The Planning Manager advised that a number of local authorities were currently finding solutions to delivering new homes. Progress had been made on improving the available data on Suitable Alternative Natural Green Space (SANGS). Access management remained an important issue.
- 5.5 There was some discussion about the need to ensure technical support for the Thames Basin Heaths Joint Strategic Partnership (TBH JSP). The Director of Development reported that the strategic partnership benefited from shared knowledge, expertise and experience. It was noted that Bracknell Forest Borough Council had employed technical expertise which had resulted in greater understanding of the issues and the provision of appropriate advice.
- 5.6 Concern was expressed that the ten dwelling rule might not be legally recognised because it failed to take account of the accumulative affect of the impact of development if the ten dwelling rule was removed.

#### **The Committee:**

- i Noted the progress made in taking forward the short term recommendations of the Assessor's report;**
- ii Considered and endorsed the draft terms of reference for the Thames Basin Heath strategic partnership included in Annex I.**
- iii Will propose to the Executive Committee that the Chairman of the Regional Planning Committee is nominated to represent the Assembly on the strategic partnership.**

#### **6. Planning White Paper - consultation response**

- 6.1 The Director of Development asked the Committee to consider the supplementary submission to the consultation on the White Paper in Annex 2. More detailed examination of the White Paper had suggested that a further, more detailed response would provide greater clarity on particular issues.
- 6.2 He highlighted para 7.1 which emphasised the necessity of funding for the timely delivery of infrastructure.
- 6.3 The following typing errors were to be corrected:
- the second word of the first sentence of para 3.9 will be replaced with **is**
  - the sixth word of the first sentence of para 5.4 will be replaced with **Basin**
- 6.4 A number of observations were made in the ensuing discussion. Concern was expressed about the potential removal of the democratic process. The importance of ensuring that local residents retained influence over this process was noted.

- 6.5 It was suggested that para 3.1 was not especially helpful particularly in the context of the current widespread flooding and the challenge faced by local authorities in implementing effective waste management systems. The flooding highlighted the need for Government to address essential investment in infrastructure.
- 6.6 It was noted that revoking the requirement to consult on 'preferred options' referred to in para 5.2 might not be welcomed if it resulted in more objections at a later stage.
- 6.7 In response to these suggestions the Director of Development indicated that the emphasis in section four, on the key role of local authorities in 'place shaping' would be strengthened to emphasise the importance of democratic accountability.
- 6.8 Referring to national policy statements in respect of water resources or waste infrastructure (para 3.1) the Director, whilst acknowledging that experience gained through the South East Plan indicated that such policies needed to be supported by appropriate funding, suggested that general policy direction would provide clearer guidance.
- 6.9 He advised that para 5.2 would be amended to give greater focus to highlighting objections at an early stage in order to facilitate a balanced approach whilst avoiding consultation overload.
- 6.10 Further discussion about streamlining the planning process drew a consensus view that there was considerable experience and technical knowledge across local authorities whose role, in the planning process, needed to be strengthened.
- 6.11 Douglas Horner advised that the CBI will not endorse Annex 2. Although it broadly supported the White Paper, it had concerns about the cost of planning permission for major infrastructure.

**The Committee ENDORSED Annex 2 as a supplementary submission to consultation on the Planning White Paper subject to the amendments recorded in the minutes.**

Douglas Horner asked for his abstention to be **NOTED**.

## **7. Energy White Paper - consultation response**

- 7.1 The Planning Manager introduced the report and advised that the Committee focused its comments on the consultation on the principle of building new power stations.
- 7.2 There was some discussion about amending the first recommendation to reflect concerns about the safe disposal of nuclear waste, greater use of renewable energy and sustainability.
- 7.3 Concern was also expressed about the speed of action required to replace fossil fuel and nuclear stations before 2020.

7.4 The Director of Development suggested alternative wording to replace Recommendation 1.

1. **The Assembly acknowledges that new nuclear capacity, together with much greater use of renewable energy sources, will be required to assist in reducing CO2 emissions and improve security of supply.**

**We are concerned, however, about the security of new nuclear facilities and about the long-term sustainability of increasing amounts of radioactive waste.**

This was **AGREED**.

Ian Hepburn and Cllr Dr Royce Longton asked that their abstention with respect to this recommendation be **NOTED**.

**The Committee noted the Energy White Paper and also AGREED the following comments on the associated consultations:**

2. **The proposals for National Policy Statements on specific types of energy infrastructure as proposed in the Planning White Paper.**
3. **Supports the amendments to the Renewables Obligation, including extending it beyond 2016 to provide continued headroom, and banding to provide additional support for particular technologies.**
4. **The proposed replacement of the Energy Efficiency Commitment with a Carbon Emissions Reduction Target (CERT) is supported. This will double the obligation on energy suppliers to deliver savings through encouraging households to make energy efficiency improvements and investment in micro-generation and behaviour change. A more radical programme of refurbishment, through provision of substantial and accessible grants and tax breaks, is required, however, to provide real incentives to all householders to improve the performance of, and reduce emissions from, their homes.**

It was **AGREED** that the recommendations will be brought to the meeting of the Executive Committee on 14 September 2007.

## **8. Strengthening Local Delivery: The Draft Local Transport Bill - consultation response**

- 8.1 The Director of Development asked the Committee to focus its attention on Annex 11 and advised that account would be taken of responses to the consultation on the three key areas of road user charging, local transport governance and public transport service agreements.
- 8.2 He advised that although road user charging had attracted the most media attention it included only a number of minor changes, but did offer decision

making powers to local authorities. The Assembly continued to take the view that charging regulations required clear, national leadership.

- 8.3 He suggested that local transport governance would attract the most regional interest in putting forward proposals offering local authorities the opportunity to develop new Passenger Transport Authorities (PTAs). However, whilst the proposal built on the work of organisations like Partnership Urban South Hampshire (PUSH), the requirement for the PTA to be applied to the whole of the county might act as a disincentive.
- 8.4 He suggested that public service agreements provided greater flexibility but emphasised the need for appropriate Government funding.
- 8.5 The Committee strongly supported these points and in addition asked that the need for passenger transport in rural areas be strongly emphasised. Particular emphasis should be given to the development of both community transport and taxis.
- 8.6 There was strong support for making a robust case for investment in transport for economically competitive centres in rural, isolated areas as less expensive and more effective than Government capital investment in larger road and rail schemes.
- 8.7 It was **AGREED** to apply bold text to the second sentence of para 3.1.4 to give greater emphasis.

Para 3.1.4

**We support the proposals in the draft Bill to increase the enforcement powers of Traffic Commissioners. However, we are concerned that there appears to be no correlation between the role of Commissioners and the objectives of statutory Local Transport Plans.**

**The Committee AGREED the response set out in Annex II which would be strengthened to reflect points recorded in the minutes.**

## **9. Regional Economic Strategy Implementation Plan**

- 9.1 The Director of Development advised that the report included the recommendations which were debated at the Plenary meeting on 18 July 2007.
- 9.2 He referred to ongoing work on the spatial dimension and economic contours and emphasised the need for more specific reference to the spatial dimension and prioritisation to give greater clarity to regionally specific actions.
- 9.3 It was intended that the views of the RPC on the Regional Economic Strategy (RES) would be incorporated into the single regional delivery plan which would be further discussed by the Committee in the autumn.
- 9.4 Jonathan Glen suggested that support for the RES Implementation Plan should be delayed until a single regional implementation delivery plan was achieved.

Proposed amendment by Jonathan Glen for an additional item to the recommendations:

- d) There should be a commitment that SEEDA and its partners will press the case with Government for increased investment in infrastructure across the Region.
- 9.5 Ian Hepburn referred to the disappointment of the SEPs that the objectives relating to air quality and climate change would have a double negative impact on transport objective eight. He noted that this did not suggest flexibility with the sustainability of the Implementation Plan and contradicted the Assembly's position on air quality, in the South East Plan. It was noted that the SEPs will submit a detailed, written response to SEEDA.
- 9.6 Douglas Horner stated that the Government must ensure that it provides adequate funding and the appropriate regulatory decisions to deliver both the R S S and the RES Implementation Plan.
- 9.7 In response to the points raised, Paul Lovejoy assured the Committee that SEEDA would endorse the spirit of the tabled and acknowledged that the Executive Committee had emphasised the need for Government to commit to the necessary investment to support the region's economic growth and planned new housing.
- 9.8 He indicated that SEEDA would work with the Assembly to consider the necessary steps for a single regional delivery plan.
- 9.9 Paul Lovejoy reported that officers were currently engaged in making the RES more accessible. He referred to the recent Sub-national Review which committed RDAs to devolution through Local Area Agreements (LAA)s and Multi Area Agreements (MAA)s subject to RDAs being able to make the case for aspects which needed to be addressed and subject to sufficient capacity at a local level. He advised that this will continue the work of Area Investment Partnerships (AIP)s.
- 9.10 He acknowledged that the double negative with respect to transport, in the Strategic Environment Assessment (SEA), posed a challenge for the Assembly and SEEDA since the objectives relating to transport provision were contained in the Regional Funding Allocations (RFA)s. He advised that SEEDA will work with the Assembly to address the issue.
- 9.11 Asked whether alignment had been achieved with the Assembly on air transport Paul Lovejoy acknowledged that this was yet to be resolved but that SEEDA would make adjustments required by Government.
- 9.12 The Director of Development advised that the Assembly was currently working with SEEDA to create a single regional delivery plan to ensure that it was consistent with both the Implementation Plan for the South East Plan and the RES. It was significant that the alignment had been reflected in the Sub-national Review following successful regional lobbying. A report will be presented to the Plenary on 14 November 2007.

The Committee **AGREED** that:

1. In preparing the response the Regional Planning Committee draws attention to the following:
  - a) Actions should be set out in spatial terms wherever possible.
  - b) Actions should be prioritised in a way that reflects the needs identified in the analysis underpinning the Regional Economic Strategy.
  - c) The level of detail within the document should be critically reviewed with a view to ensuring that only matters related to implementation are included within it.
  - d) There should be a commitment that SEEDA and its partners will press the case with Government for increased investment in infrastructure across the Region.
  - e) Support for the RES Implementation Plan should be delayed until the Single Regional Implementation/Delivery Plan was achieved.
2. Specific issues, identified by members and noted in the minutes, will be included in the response to the consultation.

## 10. Sub-regional Working Arrangements

- 10.1 The Director of Development presented the report and advised that the Sub-national Review had indicated Government's view of the way forward. It was anticipated that the Panel Report to the EiP will provide guidance on the matter.
- 10.2 He advised that a more detailed report will be presented to the next meeting of the RPC.

### The Committee:

- i) **NOTED** the content of the report.
- ii) **INSTRUCTED** officers to prepare a further discussion paper for consideration at the next meeting of the Committee.

## 11. East of England Gypsy and Traveller - issues and options

- 11.1 Mark Williams, lead officer for Gypsies and Travellers, introduced the report. He advised that the East of England's Partial Review of Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessments (GTAA)s was a year in advance of the Assembly's Partial Review. The East of England will make its submission to Government early in 2008 and the South East in late 2008 with adoption respectively in the September of 2009 and 2010.

- 11.2 Responding to questions, Mark Williams confirmed that the Issues and Options Consultation was statutory and preceded the formal consultation.
- 11.3 He confirmed that the figures in the report related to people who were static members of a mobile community and that the methodology sought to address perceived need where it arose. He advised that the perception was of a mobile community but that increasingly people were becoming more static whilst maintaining mobile working arrangements. There was also some evidence of reduction in family size. Currently there was an under provision of transitory sites but that experts took the view that regional statements of need provided a satisfactory starting point.
- 11.4 A number of points emerged from the discussion. It was important to take into account the varied needs of different groups when locating families to avoid potential tensions. It was noted that families were likely to become static where children thrived in particular schools. The use of liaison panels worked well. Some panels employed a member of the travelling community. This enabled plans to be made for future residents, the forward planning of waste management measures and a reduction in policing costs.
- 11.5 Chichester District Council had developed a Gypsy and Traveller Strategy using the Local Development Framework (LDF).
- 11.6 The Director of Planning explained that the Regional Assembly's role was to provide an allocation of pitch numbers to districts who were then responsible for locating sites and pitches. The pitch numbers were based on advice from local authorities.

**The Committee NOTED the consultation and agreed the following comments:**

- 1. Supported the use of the Communities and Local Government (CLG) methodology in relation to benchmarking and filling inconsistencies and data gaps within Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessments (GTAA)s.**
- 2. Supported the view that in the present round of Gypsy and Traveller Partial Reviews transit accommodation should be addressed through a regional statement of need as further research is required to understand this type of accommodation and need.**

**The Committee AGREED that the word research should be inserted in the third recommendation so that it reads:**

- 3. Supported the use of applying a growth rate of 3% annual compound for Gypsy and Traveller households for the Partial Review period beyond that covered by the GTAAs; and the inclusion of a reference within the Partial Review document of the need to research, monitor and review this forecast.**
- 4. Supported the need to understand implementation and delivery issues affecting the Partial Review document.**

5. **Supported East of England Regional Assembly's (EERA)'s continued close working with local authorities, the Showman's Guild of Great Britain and the Travelling Showpeople community to fully identify Showpeople's accommodation needs within the Preferred Options document.**
6. **Supported the need for close working with colleagues in the South East to understand any inter-regional issues within/relating to our respective Partial Review documents.**

## **12. Waste Strategy for England 2007**

- 12.1 The Planning Manager introduced the report on the Waste Strategy for England 2007 and advised that it supported regional waste policies. He drew attention to the ongoing joint work of the Assembly and SEEDA on recyclables and to a European project on this issue.
- 12.2 He advised that option C in para 3.2.2, which was the Government's preferred option, was the most regionally relevant and likely to receive least opposition from households.
- 12.3 There was agreement that the target for recycling was realistic and balanced and that the timescale for minimising waste by recycling was crucial to competitiveness. It was suggested that more could be done to minimise packaging. It was noted that the largest type of waste was produced by business and that a high volume of waste was categorised as raw materials.
- 12.4 The difficulty of dealing with waste in urban communities was noted especially in view of the increasing number of multiple occupancy households in the region. The Planning Manager suggested that the RPC pursued this issue.
- 12.5 Education and behaviour change were regarded as critical to minimising future waste in view of the reduction in landfill availability.
- 12.6 Responding to a question about developing markets for recyclables the Planning Manager advised that a section on priority materials considered potential markets for development.
- 12.7 A question was asked about London's waste management. The Planning Manager explained that the Mayor had instructed boroughs to set explicit targets for waste apportionment for the first time. He advised that a single waste authority for London failed to be approved by Government and was not supported by the region although the East of England had supported it believing that it would gain greater independence.

### **The Committee:**

- I. **Welcomed and NOTED the publication of the Waste Strategy 2007.**

2. **SUPPORTED** the proposals in the associated consultation to provide local authorities with the power to introduce a revenue-neutral scheme to financially incentivise householders to reduce and recycle waste - **Option C.**

**13. Items for Information:**

- a) Conformity and Major Planning Applications - statistics

This item was **NOTED.**

- b) LDD Conformity - statistics

This item was **NOTED.**

- c) London EiP

This item was **NOTED.**

**14. Any Other Business**

**South Downs National Park - put forward by Edward Dawson and tabled by Ian Hepburn**

- 14.1 The Director of Planning provided the context for this item which was raised at the Plenary on 18 July 2007. The local authorities had recently alerted the Assembly to dissatisfaction with the timescale for consultation. The Assembly had subsequently asked GOSE to intervene with the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) who had organised the consultation.
- 14.2 She reported that although it was not within GOSE's gift to alter the consultation they have commented on the submission, by Defra to ministers, setting out the arguments for extending the consultation.
- 14.3 Since the meeting of the RPC the Government has agreed to extend the consultation to 12 weeks.

**15. Date of Next Meeting**

- 15.1 Wednesday 26 September 2007 commencing at **1.00 pm** at the Institute of Materials, 1 Carlton House Terrace, London, SW1Y 5DB.

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 14.30 hrs