

**SOUTH EAST ENGLAND REGIONAL ASSEMBLY
SOUTH EAST ENGLAND DEVELOPMENT AGENCY
JOINT EUROPE COMMITTEE**

Date: 22 February 2008

Subject: **Smart Economic Growth (SEG)**

Report of: Vincent O'Connell, Surrey County Council

- 1.1 This short paper provides background and latest information on the Interreg IIIB project **Smart Economic Growth (SEG)**.
- 1.2 The project is led by Surrey County Council with both SEEDA and Buckinghamshire County Council as UK Partners. The combined transnational partnership represent some of the most highly developed areas of the EU - South East England, the central Netherlands, the Flemish authorities encircling Brussels and the Frankfurt/Rhine-Main region of Germany.
- 1.3 The project addresses a particular challenge: "Areas across North West Europe are densely populated, buzzing with economic activity and full of places of natural beauty. How do we optimise the potential of people, space and technology to ensure increased productivity and a better quality of life, whilst at the same time protecting and enhancing the environment in such regions?"
- 1.4 SEG will define smart economic growth, and explore the policies and practical approaches required to implement it more effectively across North West Europe. It will not only benefit those currently searching for ways to grow smartly but will also help emerging growth areas avoid the same problems in the future.
- 1.5 The key material output will be the SEGDEG (*the Smart Economic Growth Development Guide*) which will be a practical resource explaining smart economic growth and giving examples and advice as to how it might be achieved. We hope it will serve as a legacy of knowledge and understanding for future demonstration and implementation.
- 1.6 Key case studies from the South East being shared as instances of good practice include the South East Plan and the Regional Economic Strategy as well as detailed explorations of work undertaken by Vodafone UK and the Surrey Research Park.

- 1.7 The project recently held a highly successful “experts’ “ event in Utrecht with detailed workshop notes soon to be made publicly available. Future plans include two South East England local group meetings open by invitation to all interested parties; a final public conference in Brussels scheduled for the Autumn; and the publication of the SEGDEG itself.
- 1.8 For further details please contact Vincent O’Connell at vincent.oconnell@surreycc.gov.uk or 00 44 (0) 208 541 8087