

SOUTH EAST ENGLAND DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

BOARD MEETING ON 19th June 2008

ITEM 14

AGENCY REPORT

Recommendation

The Board is invited to **NOTE** the Agency Activity Report for May and June which represents a cross section of reports from within SEEDA organised according to the themes of SEEDA's Corporate Plan 2008-11.

GLOBAL COMPETITIVENESS

Business Support Simplification Programme Transition Management Plans

1. The national Business Support Simplification Programme (BSSP) Transition Management Board met on 15 May to consider the 9 regional Transition Management Plans. SEEDA represents RDAs on this Board, and ensured that the plans were understood in the context of the regional economic strategies. The Board received the first draft of the South East Transition Management Plan, which sets out how the South East publicly funded business support portfolio will be simplified. The plan was assessed as "green". The plan will now be further developed and re-presented in August.

South East Business Support Strategy

2. The first draft of the South East Business Support Strategy was presented to the South East Business Support Advisory Board at the 13 June meeting.

Visit by Baroness Shriti Vadera – BERR Minister for Business and Competitiveness

3. Baroness Shriti Vadera visited the South East on Friday 6 June following an invitation from the SEEDA Chairman. The visit was hosted by Slough Estates Group (SEGRO) and started with a private meeting between the Minister and SEEDA Chairman and Chief Executive. The SEEDA Chairman also hosted a Roundtable discussion between the Minister and a dozen, selected, high growth companies that had used business support in the South East. The Minister also met larger companies such as O2, UCB, Mars, Fullers and Logicalis. Rob Anderson and Alex Pratt were also involved in the visit. Peter Jones, well known member of the Dragon's Den attended the lunch (SEEDA is supporting Peter Jones' team responsible for developing a skills Academy for Enterprise).

Tourism

4. Tourism South East's (TSE) successful drive for quality over the long term has been demonstrated once again at the Enjoy England Awards for Excellence 2008 -The South East won three gold and one silver award making it their most successful year yet. The Awards were:
 - Large Hotel – Gold Award - Chewton Glen
 - Small Attraction – Gold Award – Roald Dahl Museum
 - Sustainable Tourism Award – Gold Award - Cottage Lodge
 - TIC of the Year – Silver Award - Brighton
 - The Isle of Wight also secured a Silver Award in the Best Day Out Category as voted by Travelmail.com users.
5. TSE launched this year's Regional Tourism Excellence Awards on 6 May 2008; details are posted on the TSE business to business website.
6. Tourism South East's international Welcome Host programme has been accredited by Qualification Curriculum Authority and now sits on the Qualification and Credit Framework which is a new and flexible way of gaining qualifications (this is a first for the tourism industry).

GROW Programme

European Interregional Cooperation Programmes - Global Competitiveness

7. Following the successful collaboration between the province of Noord-Brabant in the Netherlands and SEEDA, both within and outside of the GROW Programme, the two regions have taken initial steps to develop a potential framework for cooperation to cover the European Union (EU) Agenda and beyond.
8. This commenced with a series of meetings that were held in Noord Brabant on 14 and 15 May 2008, timed to coincide with the visit to the region, of the UK Ambassador to the Netherlands, His Excellency Lyn Parker. Discussions between the two regions will continue on 4 June 2008 when the two delegations are due to meet in Brussels during Green Week. Sue John, SEEDA Board Member and Chair of the Joint Europe Committee attended the meeting.

Sector Consortia

9. Envirobusiness commenced delivery of the three-year Environmental Services and Technology contract this month. The proposed activity will deliver the Regional Economic Strategy (RES) transformational action of providing global leadership in this sector, with the aim of doubling the south east market share by 2016.
10. Stephen Swain has been appointed Chief Executive Officer of the newest sector consortia, Security Industries and Technology Consortia. Stephen has worked in the security sector for a number of years, developing systems and driving change across the United Kingdom and overseas.

Next Generation Composite Wing

11. The official launch of this high profile aerospace technology programme was held on 14 May with John Denham Secretary of State for the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS) providing the key note speech. With support from the South East lead partner (QinetiQ), SEEDA obtained interest

from regional media including BBC South and Meridian and Jeff Alexander, Executive Director, Global Competitiveness, was interviewed.

Enterprise Hubs

12. Paul Walsh has been appointed as the new interim Sittingbourne Hub Director. Paul is a serial entrepreneur whose own company graduated from the Enterprise Hub last year after a trade sales.

Innovation Teams

13. A series of consultation workshops have been held throughout the region to discuss the proposed new place based innovation teams. Over 100 people attended the workshops and 70 formal responses have been received to date. The feedback will be collated and a formal response paper will be issued in June detailing the feedback that has been received. Informal feedback shows that the workshops have been a valued piece of communication within the region.

Manufacturing Advisory Service (MAS)

14. The latest figures for the SEEDA funded South East MAS programme states that the programme has added £220 million of value to SE manufacturing companies. It has handled over 17,000 initial enquiries and its advisors have visited over 2,500 businesses. MAS-SE has completed over 800 consultancy projects, arranged over 400 regional events and transferred knowledge to over 14,000 individuals working in the region's manufacturing companies.

Next Generation Broadband

15. SEEDA, on behalf of all Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) is supporting the Government's Advisory Body on broadband (the BSG) in their work to determine the economic and social value of optical-fibre connections to provide faster services. A study of public sector interventions around the world has now reported and recommends following defined "Critical Success Factors" and the encouragement of next generation broadband in regeneration and new build areas. In particular, the report states that the SEEDA model to fund resources in such areas is a low cost way to stimulate investment, particularly from property developers, in next-generation broadband technology.

Broadband Investment in Ashford

16. The partially SEEDA funded Broadband Group in Ashford has raised the profile of the ambition for the Greater Ashford area to secure a future-proof optical-fibre broadband infrastructure. This has resulted in early discussions by Ashford's Future with a number of potential investors in such an infrastructure. These investors bring with them experience gained in successful projects throughout the world.

International

17. SEEDA has secured 6 foreign direct investments which will create 97 jobs over the next 3 years.

Business development events:

Toulouse/Hamburg Aerospace Network

18. Representatives from SEEDA and Farnborough Aerospace Consortium (FAC) met in Toulouse with the Jean-Marc Thomas, Managing Director of Airbus France and President of Aerospace Valley - the leading cluster of aerospace companies in France. Discussions were held on the potential for FAC/SEEDA to collaborate with Aerospace Valley and Hanse Aerospace in Germany, on projects relating to supply chain development, advanced technologies and research, next generation systems and advanced materials and skills and training.
19. The aerospace and defence sector is an excellent example of where pan-European collaborations have resulted in the development of leading technology that can compete successfully against the best international competition. This European Aerospace project will build on this.
20. Resources have now been put in place for SEEDA/FAC to lead a project, which will identify two to three areas for collaboration, producing tangible, commercial outputs and new opportunities for two-way trade and investment.

Environmental Technology Exhibition (IFAT) – Germany

21. SEEDA, along with Advantage West Midlands (AWM) and North West Development Agency (NWDA) exhibited at the largest international environmental technology trade fair in Munich, Germany. This enabled SEEDA and Envirobusiness to showcase world class research being undertaken in the region and to meet with leading global technology companies in the water, sewage, refuse and recycling sub-sectors. The event identified 3 companies looking to set up operations in the region, 2 of which will be imminent.

Aerospace and Defence Expo - Germany

22. The FAC exhibited at the Aircrafts Interiors Expo in Hamburg on behalf of SEEDA to facilitate trade opportunities and to identify potential companies to set up operations in the South East. SEEDA's German Representative introduced the FAC to Bavairia (an Aerospace, Defence and Satellite Navigation consortium from Bavaria) to explore opportunities for collaboration and a Memorandum of Understanding is now being considered.

World Bioenergy Event – Sweden

23. SEEDA attended the event with UK Trade & Investment (UKTI) to promote the South East as an optimum business location for Swedish bioenergy, cleantech and waste management companies considering international expansion. The event identified 2 companies with the potential to set up an operation in the South East.

Venture Capital Event – Finland

24. SEEDA was invited by UKTI Finland to attend the Seed Forum International event in Helsinki. The Forum helps Nordic companies to receive funding from venture capitalists (VC) in order to internationalise. SEEDA was able to network the VC's and around 60 high-tech companies. Four companies with an interest in setting up a presence in the region were identified at the event.

SURREY and BERKSHIRE AREA TEAM

25. Berkshire Economic Strategy Board and Surrey Economic Partnership have submitted their three year business plans for assessment by SEEDA. SEEDA's Jeff Alexander remains interim Chairman of the Berkshire Economic Strategy Board whilst the Board seeks a permanent appointee. It is understood that the recruitment process for the appointment of a Project Director is also well under way.
26. Considerable support, guidance and advice where appropriate has been provided to each of the six Berkshire Unitary Authorities and Surrey County developing their Local Area Agreements to align them with the Regional Economic Strategy targets. Final Agreements will be submitted on 30 May 2008.
27. The new Area Director, Nigel Horton Baker joins SEEDA on 30 June. The Deputy Area Director, Susan Robbins, joined the team on 19 May.

SMART GROWTH

Business Link Enterprise Gateway Service

28. The Business Link Enterprise Gateway Service (EGS) continues to promote enterprise within the region's most disadvantaged communities reducing the number of economically inactive within the region through promoting self-employment and improved access to business support. A new web page is now available: www.bringyourideastolife.co.uk as part of the Business Link website.
29. From January to March 2008 the EGS provided one to one coaching support to over 230 individuals, over 200 individuals attended EGS workshops / activities and over 250 individuals attended EGS peer to peer networking events. The EGS engaged with over 760 young people through promoting enterprise activities and referred over 80 individuals to mainstream business support services via Business Link.
30. A three day Confident Communication Workshop for Asian women was held in Woking in partnership with the Central School of Speech and Drama. The workshop was successful and attendees demonstrated improved confidence to a level that they were comfortable doing interview practice, role play and speaking in front of the group about themselves. Since the workshop many of the attendees have signed up for further workshops, two ladies have accessed further support from the EGS and are now looking to become self employed and one individual, who had previously been unsuccessful in interviews, used the breathing and stress control techniques and has now secured a job. The outcomes have been so good that the EGS in North Hampshire and Surrey is now working with the Central School of Speech and Drama to bid for funding to run a series of workshops with a peer to peer support group to further embed the development and learning.
31. An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) of the EGS has been completed to ensure that the implications for equality in all aspects of the EGS have been thoroughly assessed. Consultation workshops were run with over 70 partner organisations across the region. The partnership approach of the EGS was warmly welcomed by the consultation participants who were keen to work closely with the EGS in future. Overall, the findings from the assessment were

very positive and it is expected that the EGS should have an entirely positive impact on equalities groups. Recommendations from the report for future improvement of the Service will be taken forward.

South East Women's Business Centre

32. SEEDA is working with Business Links and the South East Women's Enterprise Steering Group to develop plans for the South East Women's Business Centre - as announced in the Government's Enterprise Strategy.

Youth Enterprise Cross RDA group and the Enterprise Strategy Paper

33. Various new projects and initiatives have been established for youth enterprise support in the regions with ranging degrees of funding and scale. The Youth Enterprise Cross RDA group has been established to share best practice amongst the RDAs in this area and to build on existing frameworks already in place thus providing more efficient regional solutions. SEEDA has taken a lead role by chairing and managing this group.
34. Last March Department for Business Enterprise and Regulatory Reform (BERR) launched its Enterprise Strategy Paper. In recognition of the importance of this paper to the regions SEEDA, in its capacity as lead RDA for Enterprise and particularly its role for youth enterprise, called a meeting of the Youth Enterprise Cross RDA group with BERR to discuss the critical role played by the Youth Enterprise Managers in the regions to achieve the aims of the paper.
35. BERR presented the objectives of its Enterprise Strategy Paper to the RDAs. Key points included increased investment for enterprise education into Primary Education and Further Education, expansion of the agenda into the over 50s, a shift in emphasis from enterprise (the SME) to the individual and a focus on the Enterprise / Entrepreneurship journey for young people.
36. Officials from all three key government departments are working closely together to achieve cohesion in terms of their vision for enterprise development. SEEDA has agreed to bring these departments and RDAs around the table for a high level discussion around how the regions could work with national government to ensure a seamless connectivity between the agendas of BERR, Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS) and Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF).

Launch of the latest series of Wake Up To Enterprise

37. Prompted by the success of previous Wake up to Enterprise publications for Universities, a pilot showcasing good practice in secondary schools and further education colleges was commissioned in this latest series. The three publications comprise of a selection of exciting and innovative case studies where institutions are engaging students and staff in enterprise and demonstrate the importance of progression in enterprise education.
38. The publications complement SEEDA's strategic role in helping to build the capacity and capability in the region's institutions and organisations to support progressive, high quality enterprise development and employability skills. This series of publications has also been linked to 'The Mark' - a Magazine aimed

directly at inspiring young people themselves to fulfill their enterprising potential.

39. Wake up to Enterprise has allowed SEEDA to further raise awareness of the impact of enterprise to the individual, business and all sections of the community. The series of Wake up to Enterprise publications has been distributed to a wide audience of stakeholders, key partners and organisations from the private and public sector with the aim of highlighting existing activity and stimulating new initiatives. Examples as to how these publications have been put to effective use can be seen in schools, where further copies have been requested to distribute amongst school governors. Educational Business Partnerships have requested further copies to engage potential clients and promote existing good practice within current partnerships.

Launch of Enterprise Europe Network in the Greater South East

40. An exciting new EU initiative, supported by SEEDA is being launched to provide companies in the South East with expanded access to European markets, technology and funding opportunities. The Enterprise Europe Network is a significant six-year initiative funded through the European Competitive and Innovation Programme to help Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) across Europe develop their full potential and innovative capacity. Initial funding for the project covers the first three years and is in part provided by SEEDA.
41. SEEDA is also a key strategic partner of the consortium. Delivery partners include the Business Links (Business Support Kent as coordinator), London Technology Network and European Information Service Centre based in Southampton.
42. The Network offers the following services to regional companies:
 - One-to-one assistance on breaking into new European markets
 - Opportunity to learn how EU legislation can create new business opportunities and the chance to help shape future EU policy on business through online forums, business panels and export clubs
 - Access to the latest technological innovations from across Europe to source co-development or licensing partners for new products
 - Access to expertise from the region and Europe's research base to support your business
 - Access to the latest information on funding opportunities available through the EU's key source of research grants, Framework Programme 7 (FP7).
43. The Enterprise Europe Network is expected to build on and add value to the Business Link offer and increase innovation through collaborative research and development activity in the region. The Network for the South East of England has been launched on the 23 May 2008 in a joint event with the London and the East of England regions.

Peter Jones National Enterprise Academy, Buckinghamshire

44. The Milton Keynes, Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire (MKOB) Area Team is currently working with colleagues to respond to the proposal for a National

Enterprise Academy, based in Buckinghamshire, sponsored by the Peter Jones Foundation.

45. The Foundation is aiming to help create a step-change in how enterprise and entrepreneurship is perceived and supported as an option for adults and young people. Its aim is to establish a centre or hub around which training can be focused. Proposals include establishing a pilot by September 2008 and a potential new build-up hub facility by September 2009, with additional nationwide facilities (spokes) planned in subsequent years.
46. In addition to SEEDA, the Foundation's team is actively engaged with a number of local partners regarding funding, business plan preparation and potential sites within Buckinghamshire. These include Bucks County Council, Aylesbury Vale District Council, Aylesbury College, the Learning & Skills Council and Bucks Economic and Learning Partnership.

Enterprise - Enterprising Britain 2008

47. In the search to find the UK's most enterprising place, a collaborative entry under the banner organisation of Millbrook Technology Campus (MTC) in Southampton, has won the South East regional award for Enterprising Britain 2008, and will go through to the National Final. MTC, in the Outer Shirley area of Southampton, has been recognised for revitalising six hectares of land to create a business technology park that contains office and meeting space, acting as a catalyst for economic and social regeneration in the deprived area of Millbrook. Supported by SEEDA in its development, MTC now provides a centre of excellence for innovation, business development and enterprise.
48. The SEEDA funded 'Impact Project' in Gosport promoting greater school and business engagement were runner up in the South East.
49. Now in its fourth year, Enterprising Britain is a nationwide competition run by Make Your Mark on behalf of BERR, and in partnership with the Regional Development Agencies, to find the most enterprising place in the UK – places of enterprise excellence that have helped transform the social and economic fortunes of their area. The final judging panel includes Peter Jones from TV programme Dragons Den.

SUSTAINABLE PROSPERITY

Eco Island

50. SEEDA Executive Director for Sustainable Prosperity Oona Muirhead hosted a high-level working lunch with key Isle of Wight partners focused on the Eco Island vision and practical action that partners, with SEEDA support, need to do to ensure it becomes a reality. The outcome was a clear consensus and enthusiasm from all parties to focus on the strategically important issues for the Island and to develop the strength and success of partnership working that is becoming more evident. This was a preliminary stage in a series of planned strategic engagements to support the partners in achieving their ambitious plans.

Ecological Footprint

51. SEEDA continues through its chairmanship of the Diamonds Ecological Footprint Policy Group to support the Diamonds local authorities in delivering challenging ecological footprint targets. At the last meeting it was agreed that a 'how to' guide would be produced for each Diamond individually, from an analysis of the ecological footprint baselining and route-map work commissioned by SEEDA and SEERA, together with work that some Diamonds have separately commissioned. This should both save money for other Diamonds, and help achieve early action.

Zero Waste Region

52. An interim programme manager has been employed to pull together a robust business case and route-map for the region's pathway to Zero Waste. This programme, led by SEEDA, brings together key regional, national and local partners to concentrate actions on construction waste in the first year, as this is the major problem in the region. The creation of a region-wide initiative has persuaded partners to synchronise efforts and funding. Discussions continue with Department for Business Enterprise and Regulatory Reform (BERR), Department for Environment Food and Rural (Defra) and Communities and Local Government (CLG) to increase their support to the initiative.

Greening Campaign

53. SEEDA has contracted with the Greening Campaign to deliver a bottom-up community based programme of carbon reductions. SEEDA funding has also levered in other funds from local authorities. The campaign has now extended from Hampshire into Sussex, Surrey, and Kent. Alton in Hampshire launched the campaign formally as a whole community campaign on Saturday 8 June. Oona Muirhead represented SEEDA.

Rural Development Programme for England (RDPE)

54. The bids received under the Axis 4 Leader part of the RDPE have now been formally evaluated and decisions made. SEEDA is responsible for managing Axis 1, Axis 3 and Axis 4 of this rural European programme, though recommendations on which applications to approve are made through a Panel of partners for endorsement by SEEDA. The Panel has recommended, and SEEDA has approved, 13 of the 16 Leader bids submitted with a total value of £28 million. There is one further bid due for the second window for applications and £2million is held back for that potential bid.

Land-based Sector Champions Day

55. The South East Sustainable Food and Farming Board staged an event to celebrate the land-based sector champions supported by SEEDA. Details of a selection of these champions are set out in a publication 'Farming for the Future 2008'. The event was held at the National Trust, Petworth Place in West Sussex.

56. Afterwards SEEDA Board Member Poul Christensen opened a small demonstration building at the Cocking sawmill in West Sussex in the middle of the South Downs. The building demonstrates examples of different uses of local hardwoods.

Making the Most of 2012

Paralympic 2012 Pre-Games Training Camps announcement

57. The London Organising Committee for the Olympic Games and Paralympic Games (LOCOG) has announced the venues that have been selected to be included in the Guide to Pre-Games Training Camps for the Paralympics. A similar announcement for Olympic venues was made on 3 March.
58. Applications supported by SEEDA for venues in the South East region have resulted in 35 facilities being listed in the Paralympic Guide. This is the highest number for any region, with the North West second highest with 25 and several regions only securing eight facilities in the Guide.
59. This result reflects the importance being placed on the Paralympics by regional partners within the South East. The birthplace of the Paralympics is at Stoke Mandeville and this has provided the stimulus for partners in the region to focus considerable effort on promoting excellence in the provision of services to and by people with a disability.
60. It is now important that these venues and regional partners cooperate to market the venues to National Paralympic Committees (NPCs). A Pre-Games Training Camp will only take place if an NPC chooses to locate at one of the selected venues. Each NPC will be given £25,000 by LOCOG to help fund their training camps. This means that every camp which the region manages to secure will be worth at least £25,000 to the local economy. Many communities also hope to use training camps to build a lasting series of economic, social and educational links to the visiting nation, in order to maximise the benefits of hosting such events.

Corus Elite Triathlon series sponsored by SEEDA

61. SEEDA was a main sponsor of the Corus Elite Triathlon which took place on May 18 at Green Park Reading, which was the England stage. Other stages are held in Scotland and Wales later in the year. The Corus Elite Series is the country's only elite triathlon series, and attracts not only the very best triathletes from around the UK, but also from around the World. The funding of £90,000 for the event was split three ways between the British Triathlon Federation, Reading Council and SEEDA.
62. Hosting the Triathlon demonstrated the region's ability to stage a major competition in the run-up to the 2012 Olympics and showed that this region has the skills and infrastructure to deliver them to a world class standard. This event is consistent with the Major Sports Events Strategy and the South East Offer for 2012 and showcased the town of Reading and the wider South East region to an international audience as a world-class destination for sports events, a key business location and the gateway to Europe and beyond.
63. The event was broadcast on Channel 4 on Sunday 1 June. In addition the television production is given away free to broadcasters globally resulting in worldwide coverage. A full report regarding economic impact and media impact will be received after the last race in the series.

ENABLING INFRASTRUCTURE AND DEVELOPMENT

Incubation Physical Infrastructure

Canterbury Innovation Centre

64. Work has progressed on this project with a target start date on site of October 2008. The new 3,500 square meter Innovation Centre is linked to the University of Kent, Canterbury and will deliver a mixture of flexible accommodation for start up businesses in the knowledge based sector. It will provide 80 office, workshop and studio units on a flexible basis in an environment as conducive as possible for business growth.

South East Excellence

Continuous Professional Development (CPD) Programme

65. South East Excellence is supporting the Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) South East and the Construction Industry Council South East to develop a common Continuous Professional Development (CPD) programme across 16 professional institutes, supported by a memorandum of understanding. The professional institutes involved included the Royal Town Planning Institute (RTPI), Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors (RICS) and the Chartered Institute of Housing (CIH). It is hoped the memorandum of understanding will be signed in early June 2008, and a comprehensive programme of collaborative training will begin after the summer 2008.

Making Places

66. South East Excellence is continuing its work with a range of national organisations through its Making Places project. A third workshop was held with the Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA), the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE), the Planning Advisory Service (PAS), Government Office for the South East (GOSE), and the Advisory Team for Large Applications (ATLAS) to look further into the offer of support available to specific growth areas such as Urban South Hampshire. Terms of Reference have been drafted for the group and specific areas such as skills diagnostic work is being developed. As a result of SEEDA bringing this group together, a number of smaller collaborative projects have been taken forward. For example: the roll out of a workshop by IDeA with members in the Coastal West Sussex Area on effective democracy and leadership, and the signposting of partners to the work of CABE by GOSE as a result of a greater understanding.

Woolston

67. SEEDA submitted a detailed planning application for the marine quarter at Woolston to Southampton City Council (SCC) at the beginning of May 2008. This is based on a scheme for US super yacht builder, Palmer Johnson.
68. Southampton City Council is currently reviewing the planning application that was submitted by SEEDA's development partner, Crest Nicholson Regeneration (CNR) in March 2008. The application is expected to be determined in July 2008.
69. SEEDA is in the process of reviewing the tenders for the enabling works package. It is anticipated that a contractor will be selected and have begun work on site by the beginning of July 2008.

Daedalus

70. On 14 May 2008, Hampshire Constabulary (HC) announced that the Daedalus airfield, which immediately adjoins SEEDA's site, will remain open to existing aviation users only. SEEDA will be continuing to work with HC and the owners of the airfield, Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA), to explore the potential for linkages between the two land ownerships and long term future of general aviation at the site.
71. The Project Team continues to progress with the development of a core master plan. It is anticipated that this will be completed during summer 2008. A series of cross-authority working groups has been set up, comprising of officers from Gosport Borough Council (GBC), Fareham Borough Council (FBC) and Hampshire County Council (HCC). The groups include a Planning, Heritage and Design working group, an Economic Working Group and a Transport and Access group along with an overall Steering Group.

Isle of Wight

72. English Partnerships (EP) have selected a housing developer and are currently negotiating the terms of agreement for the East Cowes development with the details expected to be announced shortly.
73. A legal framework is being drawn up between Cowes Harbour Commission, The Crown and SEEDA for the Cowes Outer Harbour scheme. Once the framework has been agreed, an Official Journal of the European Union (OJEU) procurement process will commence for a developer.
74. Work on site investigations, environmental studies and the master plan for West Medina Mills continues to progress. SEEDA is continuing to work with solicitors to resolve the issue around the ownership of the approach road – Stag Lane.

Rochester Riverside

75. The engineering works at Rochester Riverside are now finished, completing a comprehensive £32 million programme that was delivered on time and on budget.
76. A 10m wide walkway alongside the river wall is to be officially opened on 6 June. This event will also include the burying of a time capsule by local school children. The walkway will allow pedestrian access to the river pending future development.

Chatham Maritime

Universities at Medway

77. Student numbers are very healthy and are almost 25% ahead of forecast for 2007/8, whilst full time job creation on campus is also ahead of target with numbers now at 499 employees in full time employment.

St Mary's Island

78. The current state of the residential market has seen a significant slowing of sales of new housing on the Island and as a result we are adjusting our Marketing Strategy to improve sales. Countryside Maritime Limited (the joint

venture company between SEEDA and Countryside Properties) will continue to assess the situation and market accordingly.

Shoreham

79. From 12 – 14 May 2008 a delegation of Local Authority members and officers together with representatives from the Environment Agency participated in a Best Practice Study Tour visiting Stockholm, Malmo, Amsterdam and Rotterdam. The tour had a number of key objectives. The principle was to understand key lessons in sustainability and low carbon redevelopment which could be applicable and designed and delivered for the scheme being planned at Shoreham Harbour. All participants understood valuable lessons in terms of sustainable transport, waste management, environmental impact and design principles for family housing. These lessons will now be applied to the capacity building and draft masterplanning proposals for the scheme.

Brighton Convention Centre

80. SEEDA presented a comprehensive investment package to the Industrial Development Advisory Board (IDAB) in March 2008 and BERR has subsequently advised that the level of SEEDA funding needs to be reduced. SEEDA has held several positive meetings with representatives from the other key investment partners, Standard Life Investments and Brighton & Hove City Council and each partner is working to reduce the SEEDA net investment to a figure below £10 million. SEEDA is currently reappraising the project and will re-present the scheme to the Board in September 2008.

Transport and Infrastructure - High Speed Trains (HTS)

81. The HSTintegration and HSTconnect celebrated the achievements of their projects at a conference in London on the 22 May. Attended by key industry figures and project partners from across the South East of England and North West Europe, speakers addressed not only the successes and issues of the projects to date, but also gave a visionary insight to how they see the future of high-speed rail.

STRATEGIC INFLUENCE

Gatwick Diamond – The Future Plan

82. The Sussex Area Team has been actively supporting the Gatwick Diamond Steering Group in the commissioning of an international benchmarking study and development of a Future Plan.
83. The Gatwick Diamond Initiative is a business led group supported by the 2 County Councils of Surrey and West Sussex, 6 Local Authorities, Surrey and West Sussex Economic Partnerships, Surrey and Sussex Business Links, LSC and other public sector agencies. The Chair of the Gatwick Diamond Local Authority Leaders Group recently wrote to Pam Alexander expressing their commitment to collaborative and cross boundary working to maximise the

economic development opportunities of the Gatwick Diamond as a recognised key economic area.

84. The Future Plan is to be launched on the 17 June and identifies a number of transformational actions to achieve the vision of the Gatwick Diamond 'to be a world class, internationally recognised business location achieving sustainable prosperity by 2016.
85. The next steps include the establishment of a SEEDA internal taskforce and the delivery of the transformational actions outlined in the Future Plan which will include:
 - Gatwick Diamond Connect – building on the airport as a business asset
 - Smart Growth – improving the quality of development, raising the Value Added of activity and creating Quality of Place
 - Skills – Developing Further and Higher Education to support the labour market
 - Reviewing the leadership and governance arrangements

Development of Sub-Regional Partnerships

86. The MKOB Area Team has worked closely with its strategic partners to help develop new arrangements, as a result of SEEDA's Sub-Regional Partnership Review.
87. Oxfordshire Economic Partnership (OEP) is currently undergoing a transformation of how it is managed and structured. It has developed a new collaboration with Oxfordshire County Council, which will result in the secondment of its economic development team to OEP, alongside the recruitment of a Chief Executive. This will result in increased capacity to develop its business plan and in particular business engagement.
88. Buckinghamshire Economic and Learning Partnership (BELP) is a new partnership which was formed on 1 April 2008, and brings together the previous Buckinghamshire Economic Partnership and the Buckinghamshire Lifelong Learning Partnership. BELP has now co-located with Buckinghamshire County Council Economic Development team and the Aylesbury Vale Advantage Executive Team. The Partnership is also in the process of appointing a Chief Executive Officer, which will enable the partnership deliver a step change in business engagement. The Area Team has also contributed to the development of Buckinghamshire Economic Strategy, which will be launched this year.
89. Through its membership of Aylesbury Vale Advantage (AVA), the delivery body for the Vale, SEEDA is supporting the partnership to be more ambitious in its work to deliver jobs and homes, and is leading partnership work on a refreshed and revitalised economic development action plan. SEEDA is also helping AVA in negotiations with EDF about funding mechanisms for delivery of key energy infrastructure.

Milton Keynes South Midlands Growth Area (MKSM) – Strengthening Governance Arrangements for Delivery

90. Following Hilary Chipping's appointment to the role of MKSM Director, it was agreed by the Inter-Regional Board (IRB) that there should be a review of its governance arrangements and the structure of its sub-groups. A consultation paper was issued on 21 May, and initial comments are requested by 6 June in order that this can be discussed at the next IRB meeting on 24 June.
91. SEEDA has subsequently met the other RDAs covering MKSM, East England Development Agency (EEDA) and East Midlands Development Agency (EMDA), to discuss how we use our respective capacity and efforts to strengthen the work being undertaken collectively in this sub-region, and ensure a greater focus from government on this Growth Area. As a result the three RDAs have agreed with the MKSM Director that SEEDA will be the representative on the two top level committees, and on the Transport sub-Group. This decision has been well received by local authority colleagues. The RDAs will also meet with the MKSM Director in June to brainstorm the overall economic vision for MKSM.

Partnership for Urban South Hampshire (PUSH) Multi-Area Agreement (MAA)

92. In the last month SEEDA has continued to support PUSH in the development of its MAA for South Hampshire. SEEDA and the Business Link for Hampshire & Isle of Wight have been actively involved in determining the outcomes and enabling measures that relate to employment & skills, innovation, delivering land for economic development and delivering effective business support.
93. The MAA is subject to ministerial sign-off in June. The process of establishing PUSH and its associated economic strategy has already resulted in a strong alignment of priorities and investment plans across partners including the Local Authorities, Transport for South Hampshire, Jobcentre Plus, the LSC, Business Link and SEEDA and is a model of good practice for partnership working for future MAAs in the South East.

Solent Waterfront Strategy Progress

94. A newly-formed Steering Group to oversee actions arising from the Waterfront Strategy met on 30 April. Chaired by SEEDA and comprising key employers, representatives from environmental agencies, stakeholder groups and local authorities, there was unanimous agreement to the recommendations arising from the report. An Implementation Group chaired by Marine South East to translate recommendations into action and a Communications Group chaired by SEEDA and tasked with disseminating the key messages to stakeholders have also been formed.