

SOUTH EAST ENGLAND DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

BOARD MEETING ON 18 September 2008

ITEM 17

AGENCY REPORT

Recommendation

The Board is invited to **NOTE** the Agency Activity Report for August and September 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 (BSSP)

1. The South East BSSP Transition Management Plan has been given a "green light" by the national Transition Management Board. Under the guidance of the South East Business Support Advisory Board (SEBSAB), the Plan now provides the template for the active transition of the region's publicly funded business support offer into the new, BSSP compliant framework. The Plan will continue to be developed, as this work progresses.

Joint Response to Changing Economic Circumstances

2. South East England Development Agency (SEEDA), jointly with HM Treasury and the Department for Business, Economic and Regulatory Reform (BERR), published a document on 7 August setting out a joint response to the current economic challenges faced by businesses. This document highlighted the strengths of an economy that has developed high value businesses in the manufacturing and financial and business services sectors but recognised that businesses do face challenges. The document was launched at a Business Breakfast attended by over 50 businesses and chaired by the SEEDA Chairman with speeches by Gareth Thomas, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Trade and Jonathan Shaw, Regional Minister for the South East. The centrepiece of the launch (and the document) was the announcement of a SEEDA funded £10 million regional response to the prevailing economic situation (see Annex 1).
3. SEEDA will be providing regular monthly inputs in to the Government's proposed 'State of the Regions' reports.

Innovation and Growth Teams

Consultation Feedback

4. The recent consultation on the proposal to establish a regional network of teams to drive innovation and growth in the South East elicited a high level of response from partners. 97 written responses were received and over 150 people attended seven workshops held around the region, including a strong response from local authorities. Overall support for the proposed model was very high with 87% of respondents supporting the proposal in principle. Only 11% had reservations and just 2% opposed the proposal in principle.
5. A response document was published by SEEDA in early July summarising the feedback from the consultation process and indicating how this was being used to shape the model. This set out the approach to geographical coverage of the region through the creation and operation of eight Innovation and Growth Teams that will form a regional business Innovation and Growth Network. It also specified the two phase approach to implementing the model with four teams coming on stream in April 09 and the remainder in October 09.

Invitation to Tender

6. "An Invitation to Apply for Grant Funding" was published on 20 August. SEEDA is seeking applications through a grant competition process from partnerships in the four zones in the first phase of the implementation. The deadline for receipt of applications is 2 October 2008. Applications will be assessed against a set of published criteria. Successful applicants will be invited to proceed to submit more detailed business plans which will then go through the SEEDA approval processes.

Emerging Technologies

Intelligent Transport Systems and Services

7. Positive feedback has been received from the members of the two projects funded under the Intelligent Transport Systems strand of SEEDA's Emerging Technologies Programme of Collaborative Research & Development (R&D) after they presented to the Steering Group of the Technology Strategy Board's Intelligent Transport Systems & Services Innovation Platform on 25 June. The Steering Group were provided with an update of the projects' progress to date and were given an opportunity to see how the Wi-Max wireless communications system implemented in the town could benefit Reading Council in providing new services to the traveller and reducing costs.

Flexible Knowledge Transfer Partnerships (KTPs) - Business+

8. SEEDA's Business+ programme was promoted in an article on BBC South East television's lunchtime and evening bulletins on the 17 July. The item focussed on the success of a partnership between Jim Garrahy's Fudge Kitchen and the Natural Resources Institute at the

University of Greenwich, which has managed to extend the shelf life of a luxury product from 7 to 21 days without resorting to artificial additives or changing the essential characteristics of the fudge. The project has opened new distribution routes to the company through delicatessens, food halls and farm shops and is anticipated to have a significant impact on the company's turnover and profitability. The University has also benefited by gaining experience of working in a new food area.

BERR Review of the National Manufacturing Strategy 2008

9. RDAs have welcomed the Government's new strategy for the UK's manufacturing sector – 'New Challenges, New Opportunities' – unveiled on 8 September to help UK firms take advantage of changing global trends in manufacturing. The Strategy focusses on seizing the opportunities of the low carbon economy, supporting skills, realising overseas opportunities and improving the perceptions and understanding of manufacturing. RDAs, including SEEDA recognise the strategic importance of manufacturing and provide a broad portfolio of business support including the flagship programme 'Manufacturing Advice Service, investments in new technology and other services accessible through Business Link.
10. SEEDA contributed significantly to the development of the Strategy through supporting the secondment of our manufacturing expert to work with BERR to finalise the Strategy and work on identifying the appropriate level of RDA support. SEEDA is at the early stages of preparing for a new MAS programme to start on 1 April 2009 (when the current programme ends) and will be working on a manufacturing strategy for the South East that supports the national strategy.

Broadband and Information and Communication Technology (ICT)

11. Work commissioned by SEEDA to survey the location of optical fibre telecommunications infrastructure and the current broadband speeds in the south east was completed at the end of August 2008. The location information will provide planners and developers useful information on the main network "points of presence" which will enable local schemes to connect to national and international networks. The broadband speed survey will provide a reliable base of data and will highlight the poorly served areas. This will help individuals and organisations that are considering the provision of community broadband networks.

National Aerospace Technology Strategy

Autonomous Systems Technology Related Airborne Evaluation & Assessment

12. ASTRAEA is a public-private sector collaborative programme to develop the technologies, systems, facilities together with the necessary regulatory environment so that unmanned aircraft can operate safely and routinely in UK civil airspace. SEEDA's investment (£2 million) is

supporting a high level of R&D and knowledge transfer in the South East and a range of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in working with QinetiQ, Thales, Flight Refuelling and BAE Systems.

13. Good progress is being made in relation to both synthetic environment and live flight demonstrations and industry are collaborating extremely well in relation to this. Industry are also ramping up engagement with regulators in relation to the World Radio Conference 2011 with a view to securing dedicated radio frequencies for secure ground to air communications for unmanned air vehicles. BAE Systems and Cranfield University have also received regional and national innovation awards for their work under ASTRAEA.

HealthMap

14. SEEDA funding (£3 million over three years) is contributing to the HealthMap, an R&D programme to develop Health Management and Prognostic methods for the aerospace industry. An independent technical review was conducted into a Healthmap project that develops structural damage sensing technology for aerospace applications by Airbus UK which concluded that the emerging technological direction is very well aligned with industry requirements. This sets a very solid foundation for future commercial exploitation.

Next Generation Composite Wings

15. The Next Generation Composite Wing programme has been designed to develop and validate technologies appropriate to the high volume manufacture of the next generation Airbus single aisle aircraft. Work is now underway between the industry partners and the Farnborough Aerospace Consortium to scope and agree the regional economic milestones and Key Performance Indicators (KPI) for the South East (SE) element of the programme. SEEDA and the other RDA regions are also firming up engagement with the Technology Strategy Board (TSB) in relation to the wider management of this challenging national programme.

Surrey and Berkshire Area Team

16. SEEDA's Surrey and Berkshire Area Team contacted local agencies and organisations in response to the HM Treasury request on regional economic prospects to gather soundings and perceptions as to the local impact of the economic slow down and credit crunch. It found that, for the Surrey and Berkshire business and economy, in comparison to other areas, was not feeling the effects as strongly and was still fairly confident overall.
17. The Surrey Economic Partnership has signed its contract for delivery of its business plan and the new working arrangements. SEEDA is encouraging the Partnership to explore its potential role in supporting SEEDA's Corporate Cabinet. SEEDA is also influencing Surrey County Council's corporate plan and its approach to economic development of the county.

18. The Berkshire Economic Strategy Board has appointed a new Chief Executive (Hugh West) who started on 1 September.
19. SEEDA is encouraging Reading UK Community Interest Company to take forward the concept of the Reading Diamond and the organisation has offered to take a lead role along with SEEDA to develop this further.

International

20. SEEDA has secured 15 foreign direct investments which will create 192 jobs and safeguard 430 jobs over the next 3 years.

Business development events:

UK Trade and Investment European Headquarters (UKTI EHQ) Seminar – Seoul

21. SEEDA was invited to attend a business seminar organized by the British Embassy in Seoul, Korea. The seminar focused on investment-ready organizations seeking to establish a European HQ and was attended by senior management and decision-makers, providing an excellent opportunity for networking. Over 80 companies attended the event and SEEDA was able to identify 8 companies who are interested in setting up an operation in the UK.

Bangalore Bio – India

22. SEEDA met with several Indian companies looking to establish an office or form collaborative partnerships in the UK at India's biggest biotechnology event. The unique benefits of locating in the South East were presented to the companies and subsequent leads have been followed up with further information.

Envex – Korea

23. SEEDA attended Envex Korea, the largest international environmental event in Korea. Organized by the Korea Environmental Preservation Association, SEEDA met with potential investors to discuss opportunities for strategic partnerships and links to the environmental technology and renewable energy sector in the South East.

Seoul Metropolitan Government Delegation – Korea

24. SEEDA hosted a delegation from the Seoul Metropolitan Government. The visit provided an opportunity for SEEDA to present on the region and highlight the sector strengths of the South East, opportunities for R&D collaboration and knowledge transfer partnerships.

Japanese Automotive Engineering Exposition (JSAE) – Yokohama

25. SEEDA attended the exposition which is sponsored by the Society of Automotive Engineers of Japan. Over 400 companies exhibited at the show, showcasing the latest in automotive technology and R&D. SEEDA was able to meet with several Japanese companies and highlight the region's strengths in this sector.

Basingstoke, Inward Investment Proposition

26. SEEDA is advising Basingstoke Council on how to profile and position the town for inward investment. The proposition will be driven by the major technology driven sectors in and around Basingstoke and Hampshire.

UKTI Trade Sector Advisors

27. The Security Trade Sector Advisor has played an instrumental part in setting up the new security consortia. The Bioscience Advisor has been working with a foreign company which has just set up a new operation in the region on their international business development strategy. The Bioscience Advisor also attended Bio 2008 in San Diego as part of a trade mission and met with potential US investors at the event. The Marine Advisors organised a meet the buyer event in Portsmouth which produced a number of contract opportunities for businesses in the South East. The advisers also participated in the UKTI sponsored, British Association of British Business Angels Network event in Kent in conjunction with Finance South East.

Rural Development Programme for England

28. SEEDA have recently approved two large pan-regional training projects which will deliver £3.3 million of training funding from the European Rural Development Programme for England (non Single Pot) across the South East and London in the next three years. The funding will support training, group based advice, information provision and the uptake of the latest technology for all adults within agriculture, food and forestry businesses. The objective is to raise the overall level of skills in the farming, foods and forestry sectors as a means of improving the competitiveness of these industries and the contribution they can make to a better environment and healthy and prosperous communities.

Basingstoke Diamond Update

29. In discussion with Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council, SEEDA has consolidated its activity and support for the Basingstoke Diamond to focus on Inward Investment, skills and broadband. The three key projects for the next 12 months are:
- Determining the inward investment proposition for North Hampshire
 - Supporting the establishment of a Learning Campus bringing Further Education, Higher Education and innovation facilities to the town centre
 - Working with the Council and e-hampshire to identify and resolve broadband 'cold spots'
30. In support of its Diamond status, Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council has also established an Economic Prosperity Board which will become the focal point for monitoring progress across a range of projects and activity to drive forward the Basingstoke Diamond, and launched the Destination Basingstoke Project to promote and develop

the town's profile and potential to investors and residents as an attractive commercial centre with a high quality of life offer.

SMART GROWTH

National Business Link

31. The Quarter 1 National Business Link Management Information report, authored by SEEDA, was submitted to BERR in August. National Business Link performance continues to improve with growth in the number of users of the service and the number of customers provided with in-depth support. The new style report incorporates a themed section which helps to tell the story behind the performance. The latest report contains a focus on the contributions made by Business Link to entrepreneurship and business performance amongst under-represented business communities (supporting diversity). RDAs and Business Link Providers (BLPs) report that whilst Business Link has always dealt with significant numbers of customers from under-represented groups, the current levels of market penetration reflect a concerted effort to reach out and promote the business support offer. Particular mention was made of SEEDA's Enterprise Gateway programme and its ability to focus enterprise creation activity in the most under performing areas.
32. The National RDA Business Link report, commissioned by the RDA Chairs and authored by SEEDA, was published in September. The publication highlights the performance of the Business Link network in 2007-08 and showcases some excellent examples of how the service supports Government and the RDAs' joint objectives to raise the competitiveness and productivity of businesses across England. The report also identifies for national and local Government partners and representative organisations the opportunities and benefits of partnering with Business Link, as well as highlighting some of the challenges that lie ahead for the service.

Business Link in the South East

33. In the past 12 months, Business Link has worked with over 17,000 individuals who are thinking of starting a business and more than 2,500 of these have gone on to start a business (a start up rate of just over 1 in 6). A large number of the 17,000 individuals have engaged with Business Link through the regional Business Link Start-Up programme – a series of workshops aimed at providing budding entrepreneurs with the information they need to start and grow their business. The workshops have created significant buzz around the region, with many individuals coming forth of their own volition, to thank Business Link for the support it has provided through the regional Start-up programme.

Business Link Enterprise Gateway Service

34. The Business Link Enterprise Gateway Service (EGS) continues to deliver high quality, impartial support to individuals from disadvantaged communities facing barriers to enterprise. During April to June this year, the EGS assisted 541 individuals towards getting a job and assisted 189 people with their skills development.
35. EGS clients are assisted in many ways through activities such as skills development workshops, one to one mentoring sessions and peer networking. From April to June this year, 4,921 individuals were engaged in considering enterprise by the EGS. Out of those who went on to access support from the service, 268 people received one to one mentoring support, 259 individuals attended skills development workshops and 357 people attended peer networks. Local examples of the activities undertaken to achieve these results include:

South East Hampshire

36. The EGS Director is working on developing a 'Paulsgrove Millionaires' enterprise project in Paulsgrove, a deprived estate in Portsmouth. The project will take a group of 16-19 year olds through the development of a large-scale business idea over the course of 12 months. The EGS Director has assembled a consortium to drive the project forward including members from Community Development Finance Institutions (CDFI), Portsmouth University Business School, local schools and Portsmouth City Council. The implementation of the project will commence with a planning seminar in September.
37. A skills development workshop programme is now available for EGS clients in Portsmouth City and Gosport. The suite of workshops offers individuals the opportunity to explore how to transfer life skills into business, have an introduction to mind-mapping as a tool for generating ideas, explore their self-esteem and build confidence, develop their communication skills and body language to help people discover the kind of person they are and how to overcome their barriers to success.

North Kent

38. The EGS in North Kent celebrated the 2nd birthday of its Medway Women's Enterprise Network in August. A celebration event was held at the New Art Centre in Chatham and was a great success with over 50 members and their guests attending. Network members had the opportunity to showcase their businesses and provided the entertainment for the party. Party bags were handed out containing some helpful business information from the EGS. The men who attended the event were very enthusiastic and as an outcome, the EGS in North Kent is now planning to hold some combined network meetings in the future.

Berkshire

39. The Berkshire EGS has been raising its profile within priority communities by attending local events including the Whitley Muslim Education Trust Fun Day, the Pakistan Independence Day celebrations in Reading and the Chalvey Fun Day in Slough. These events have resulted in new partnership work developing and clients wanting to

attend workshops and advice sessions. A number of EGS skills development workshops are run in Berkshire, the service recently ran two confidence building workshops and a workshop focused on 'exploring your potential through colour'. The workshops were a great success with clients.

Regional Customer Relationship Management and Information System Programme (RCRMIS)

40. The implementation of the RCRMIS commences in September 2008. This has resulted from a successful Official Journal of the European Communities (OJEU) Competitive dialogue procurement process, lasting 10 months in duration, culminating in a contract award to find a partner to deliver the technology and change management aspects required to realise the programme.
41. The South East Business Link Provider's and Train to Gain are the initial delivery partners to integrate to the RCRMIS; the system development and transition will commence in October 2008. This will go some way to the realisation of the single customer journey and real time access to trend based data across publicly funded business support in the South East region.

Enterprising Britain

42. SEEDA celebrated its Enterprising Britain 2008 Regional Winner with Julie Kapsalis, Director of Business Support and Enterprise presenting Millbrook Technology Campus in Southampton with their trophy celebrating winning the regional heat of the competition. Gosport Borough Council, leading the entry for the Impact Project Board in Gosport, was the South East runner up. Enterprising Britain is a UK wide competition run by BERR and Make Your Mark. The national judging panel, which included Peter Jones from Dragons Den, visited Millbrook Technology Campus at the end of June to assess their achievements for the next stage. The national winner will be announced at a reception hosted by BERR at No. 11 Downing Street on 16 October.

Women's Enterprise

43. Further to the success of SEEDA's Women's Enterprise programme of events called 'What's Stopping You?' in 2007-2008, SEEDA is again working with the regional Business Link Providers to deliver a further 24 events over the next 18 months. These events specifically target pre-start and pre pre-start women who may have considered starting a business but have not accessed business support services before. In 2007-2008, over 1,200 women registered for the seminars which were held in various locations right across the South East, of which over 350 have already entered into the Business Link start up programme or accessed Enterprise Gateway support. The next series of events will

commence in November 2008, with some events specifically targeting hard to reach groups including Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) and 50+.

Women's Business Centre

44. The regional Women's Enterprise Steering Group has agreed the Women's Business Centre pilot proposal put forward by SEEDA and Business Link. It is anticipated that the project will be contracted during September and be operation in October. The centre will be a mixture of virtual and physical offering delivered through the Business Link Enterprise Gateway service. The physical part of the pilot will be in Chatham, Kent and will form part of SEEDA's contribution to the Thames Gateway Economic Development Investment Plan.

Train to Gain

45. Results from the employer satisfaction survey carried out by the Learning and Skills Council show that Skills Brokerage in the South East scores above average in all measures. The South East received an overall satisfaction rate of 91%.
46. The first sector compact with the Sector Skills Council for science, engineering and manufacturing technologies (SEMTA) is due to be launched in September. This will support the skills brokerage team to access businesses in this sector that do not currently benefit from SEEDA's business support activities. Through the compact, businesses will have access to specialist support and employees will be encouraged to undertake qualifications at Levels 2 and 3 in order to help drive business productivity.

Hosting the World

47. The London 2012 Olympic Games and Paralympic Games will be the largest cultural event ever to be held in the UK. As a gateway for the 2012 Games and host region for Olympic and Paralympic events at Eton Dorney Lake, improving the skills of employees in the South East will leave a legacy in terms of higher productivity, more sustainable communities and enhanced cultural and sporting venues and activities. As part of SEEDA's Training Pools Programme, a number of employer-led projects are being run to help ensure that the region has world-class standards of customer service in tourism, leisure and hospitality sectors within the Eton Dorney corridor.
48. The 'Hosting the World' projects will include a number of skills programmes to help over 200 business managers and supervisors maximise the business benefits of the 2012 Games. The projects will help develop managers and supervisors to train and coach their own employees and volunteers and to appreciate the business benefits of training and career development. Hosting the World will also enrol over 100 tourism, leisure and hospitality organisations as 'champions' who will

provide business support by signposting other owners, managers and supervisors to other training and development. Hosting the World will provide a welcome boost to the visitor economy and ensure that the South East region can maximise the potential benefits of the 2012 Games.

Continuing Employment Support Service

49. SEEDA currently funds a brokerage service for all companies in the South East experiencing redundancies. It operates in conjunction with Jobcentre Plus in the South East. Two dedicated brokers have built up effective networks of partners and employers, through which they are able to offer support very often before they are informed officially through the companies' official notification to BERR. This means that they can tailor support needed by employees to gain alternative work as quickly as possible. Support includes CV writing, interview techniques, jobsearch, skills analysis, business set up, confidence building and benefits / pensions advice etc.
50. During the first quarter of this financial year, the two brokers, Graeme Carey and Sarah Young have supported 2,261 workers across the region. The number of redundant workers needing support has more than doubled in comparison to the same quarter last year. Evidence shows that through this type of intervention, we have been able to support 79% of workers seen back into work without recourse to benefits. In the current economic climate, given the increase in redundancies, it does put the South East in a stronger position to help keep the maximum number of affected workers in employment.

SUSTAINABLE PROSPERITY

New Vestas Blade Technology Centre for the Isle of Wight

51. On 15 August, Vestas Wind Systems announced plans for a new Blade Technology Centre on the Isle of White to design and test the world's longest wind turbine blades. The new Blade Technology Centre will create high quality jobs and will contribute to the South East's position as a leading location for research and technology. The new centre is scheduled for 2010. In the meantime Vestas R&D will occupy workspace on the Venture Quays site in East Cowes. In the medium term, SEEDA will work with Vestas Technology to identify a permanent site to build a bespoke Technology Centre on the Isle of Wight.
52. Subsequently, Oona Muirhead, Executive Director for Sustainable Prosperity was interviewed on Isle of Wight radio, discussing the renewables market and what this investment means for the Island's economy.

Ecological Footprint Report Published

53. SEEDA, in partnership with the Regional Assembly and World Wildlife Foundation, has published a report which sets out how the South East can work towards stabilising, and then reducing its ecological footprint – one of the three high level Regional Economic Strategy (RES) objectives. A follow on piece of work has been commissioned to provide practical guidance to Diamonds for Investment & Growth and other Local Authorities on how they can develop their own “route maps” towards lower ecological footprints. Oona Muirhead, Executive Director for Sustainable Prosperity, wrote to 36 Diamond Leaders and Chief Executives about this work and in September. The guidance will be complete and ready for use by Diamond Local Authorities in early 2009.

Business Resource Efficiency and Low Carbon Programmes

54. SEEDA is developing a Strategy for Business Support on Resource Efficiency, discussed with stakeholders at a workshop on 10 September. The aim is to provide a framework to achieve a step change in business adoption of environmental business practices, ultimately without the need for public funding. The Strategy builds on earlier workshops held with partners in May and July.
55. In a similar vein, a workshop will be held at the end of September to finalise the regional approach to low carbon programmes, in particular around retrofitting of energy efficiency in existing housing, and achieving a step change in the deployment of renewable energy within the South East. This builds on previous workshops held earlier this year.

Regional Leadership Initiative on Tackling Climate Change

56. SEEDA is committed to reducing its carbon emissions by 30% by 2011 and other regional bodies have also made similar commitments. To ensure our respective low carbon journeys are effective and as efficient as possible, SEEDA is proposing a regional Leadership Initiative on Tackling Climate Change. The initiative is aimed at providing mutual support, sharing knowledge, experience, and providing consistent leadership messages on tackling climate Change. Organisations such as the Environment Agency, Government Office for the South East and the National Health Service have already signed up to the initiative; which will see regional leaders committing to reducing their organisations' carbon footprints.

2012 Games

57. To celebrate the official handover of the Olympic Games from Beijing to London on the 24 August, thousands of people across the South East celebrated with special community events and flag raising ceremonies. SEEDA influenced every local authority in the region to sign up for a flag

and there were more than 90 handover events across the region to celebrate the Olympic values of friendship, respect and endeavour, and to launch the build up to London 2012. Particularly successful events included a series of picnics in West Sussex, linked by a flaming baguette relay. The Isle of Wight converted the flag into a custom made spinnaker, and this made a high profile journey to the Island's handover event.

58. Pdraig Herlihy led a team of regional colleagues to the Beijing Olympic Games in August, and will also be leading a team to the Paralympic Games in September. The main purpose is to promote the South East's Pre Games Training Camps to National Olympic Teams and National Paralympic teams. The South East has secured over 135 Olympic and Paralympic training camp venues in the official guide, which is the highest amount for any nation or region in the UK. It is now vital to promote these venues to the managers of national teams, in order to encourage them to book their training camps in South East venues. The meetings held in Beijing were very positive, with many countries interested in the South East proposal to widen the links between countries and communities in the region from a simple training camp to a much wider relationship covering economic, cultural, leisure, tourism, educational and sports science links.

The Cultural Olympiad

59. The Cultural Olympiad will provide an opportunity to try something new, to encourage community involvement, to think differently about the Olympic Games and Paralympic Games, to engender exemplary cultural activity and to showcase Britain's creativity to the rest of the world. It launches over the weekend of 26 to 28 September.
60. Three major Cultural Olympiad events are taking place in the South East in the coming months which all offer a unique opportunity to profile the South East as an innovative, creative and inclusive region. These are Paralympic Handover Day at Stoke Mandeville and Aylesbury (17 September) and Cultural Olympiad launch weekend projects in Dover (26 September) and Windsor (27 September). These locations are all priority places for the Cultural Olympiad in the South East.

Paralympic Handover Day

61. A day's celebration is planned at the birthplace of the Paralympics, Stoke Mandeville. It is complemented by activities for young people of mixed abilities in Aylesbury Town Centre – the 17 September also marks the launch of the London Organising Committee of the Olympic and Paralympic Games (LOCOG) Education Programme. Nick Fuller Head of Education at LOCOG attends the event, increasing an already strong opportunity to attract national television news coverage.

Light Up Dover

62. Friday 26 September, Nightfall. Dover's Eastern Harbour is animated by a magnificent pyrotechnic display by internationally acclaimed and Kent based pyrotechnicians, The World Famous (TWF). This show will culminate in great celebration of fire and a large scale 'torch' will journey

across the water with fireworks linking the sea and the land above the iconic white cliffs adjacent to Dover Castle where a medieval beacon will also be lit – an ancient welcome. Use of iconic location supports possibility of international press. This event is both spectacle and a moving show, a celebration honouring the past and supporting the towns desire to host the Olympic torch in 2012. It will be one of a small number of major national events to celebrate Open Weekend, the launch of the Cultural Olympiad.

Light Up Windsor

63. The project involves commissioning a light art installation from artist Laurent Louyer along a walking route in Windsor which will animate public space and reveal the familiar in a new way over a period of six weeks. The project will be opened for the launch of the Cultural Olympiad's Open Weekend. It is one of the major launch projects in the UK. A celebratory community project for children and young people which will culminate in activity on 8 November at the conclusion of the project, which will coincide with Guy Fawkes' Night and Diwali.

ENABLING INFRASTRUCTURE AND DEVELOPMENT

Westwood Business Park, Thanet

64. The construction of Westwood Business Park, originally named Eurokent Business Park, is progressing well with completion on target for the autumn of this year. Marketing is underway and potential tenant interest shown is strong.

Woolston

65. Southampton City Council (SCC) resolved to grant planning consent for both the Crest Nicholson Regeneration (CNR) hybrid application and the Palmer Johnson (PJ) detailed application on Monday 18 August. Following completion of the commercial negotiations with both CNR and PJ, it is anticipated that that building work will start on both the marine quarter and Phase 1 and 2 of the Crest scheme by spring 2009.
66. Advanced works have commenced on site which includes the demolition and removal of the Fitting Out Trades Complex (FOTC) building.
67. SEEDA and Marine South East are actively working with PJ regarding their workforce requirements and local training and up-skilling opportunities.

Daedalus

68. The Project Team continue to progress with the development of a core masterplan. The team are in the process of agreeing the most appropriate planning and development strategy. An update newsletter and public exhibition is being planned for October 2008.

East Cowes

69. SEEDA continues to progress negotiations with Waitrose regarding the terms of the Development Agreement. Once these have been agreed, a planning application for the scheme will be submitted to Isle of Wight Council.
70. It is anticipated that the contractor appointed to undertake the phase 1 infrastructure works will be announced in mid September and that construction will commence at the end of October.

Cowes Outer Harbour

71. The preparation of an Environmental Assessment is proceeding. It is envisaged that an application for all necessary consents will be submitted in late autumn 2008. Following this, it is anticipated that an OJEU (Official Journal of the European Communities) procurement process will then commence for a developer.

Marchwood

72. SEEDA has agreed terms for the sale of employment land to Oceanic Estates. The remediation works required under the Ministry of Defence (MoD) Option Agreement have now finished. On receipt of the verification report, this project will be complete.

West Medina Mills

73. The team is currently preparing a planning application to be submitted to the Isle of Wight Council (IoWC) for a marine employment development in October 2008. This will also include an application to realign and reconstruct the approach road - Stag Lane.

South East Excellence

Raising Our Game

74. The first Raising our Game programme in the South East came to a close with 18 participants graduating from the Partnership for Urban South Hampshire and surrounding area. Raising our Game is a post graduate certificate in leading sustainable communities delivered through the Academy for Sustainable Communities (ASC) and explores the concepts of leadership, visioning and community engagement as part of the work based learning course.
75. The graduation event was introduced by Trevor Osborne, Chair of South East Excellence, with Kathy Slack, Area Director for SEEDA setting the south east context. Dr Tim Williams, Government Advisor to Minister Yvette Cooper on Regeneration, Planning, Housing and Growth Areas, was the key note speaker at the event.
76. The activity in PUSH was the South East pilot and, judging on this success, SEEDA is looking to roll this programme out in other growth areas over the Corporate Plan period.

Retrofitting

77. In July, SEEDA held a consultation event on a piece of research commissioned earlier in the year in conjunction with GOSE, the Regional Assembly and Climate South East on how the region can reduce residential carbon emissions by 20% by 2016, and assist with the delivery of national fuel poverty targets, through achieving energy efficiency in the existing housing stock. Over 90 delegates attended the event to hear presentations from the Energy Saving Trust and Energywatch, as well as engage in a range of group work sessions to explore solutions to achieving sustainable energy activity. The final report with recommendations is expected in the autumn.

Continuous Professional Development Memorandum of Understanding

78. The South East now has a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in place to deliver a common Continuous Professional Development programme. The Royal Institute of British Architects South East and the Construction Industry Council South East, supported by SEEDA, have been working together to engage a range of professional institutes in order to scope their interest in working together to develop a common training programme, taking into account the sustainable communities agenda and what this means for their organisations and members.
79. The Memorandum was signed by 14 professional institutes in June, with a further 6 due to sign in the autumn. From this, a programme of collaborative training will be developed. The institutions have also agreed to collaborate in responding to consultation on a range of Government policies, as well as work together in addressing the shortage of young people accessing the built environment as a possible career option (with a particular focus on the new 14 – 19 year old diploma in Construction and the Built Environment).

Where We Live: A Guidebook to Urban Design

80. Through South East Excellence, SEEDA grant funded the Solent Centre for Architecture + Design to produce a guidebook that introduces some key concepts of urban design. 'Where We Live: A Guidebook to Urban Design' is a clear and concise reference guide to the language of urban design and the built environment. The book has been distributed via the Solent Centre for Architecture + Design, the Kent Architecture Centre and SEEDA.
81. Response to date has been excellent. It has been incredibly well received by professionals who have stated that it has helped them get back to basics and in particular think more carefully about how they talk to the general public. There have been requests for the book from the Design Council for Wales, various Police Forces and the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE).

Transport & Infrastructure

82. Following intensive lobbying from SEEDA working jointly with Kent County Council (KCC), Ashford Borough Council and Nord-Pas de Calais, Eurostar has decided to reinstate a daily stopping directly linking Ashford and Brussels from December 2008, a year after it reduced services citing commercial considerations
83. SEEDA has also been successful in securing European funding to help develop an inter-regional service between East London, Kent and northern France using the high speed line. SEEDA has been working with Network Rail and the Government to upgrade the Hastings and Ashford line to tap into the South East coast market.

Kent and Medway Area Team

Turner Contemporary Margate

84. The public sector funding package is now in place with SEEDA's decision to invest £4.15 million over the next three years towards the cost of building the Turner Contemporary arts and cultural centre in Margate. The world class international art gallery is part of a broader redevelopment plan of the eastern seafront and forms a critical element of the town centre renewal plan for Margate. The centre will feature galleries, a café, conference and studio space. It will feature works by Joseph Mallord William Turner (JMW Turner), reflecting the artist's links with Margate, and other contemporary art works on loan through an agreement with the Tate Gallery.

Tour of Dover 18 August

85. As a result of the Growth Point designation recently assigned to Dover, representatives from the Government Office for the South East (GOSE),

Communities and Local Government (CLG), other regeneration partners and SEEDA took part in a tour of Dover on 18 August. The site visits included both current and proposed regeneration projects. A very useful round table discussion then took place which culminated in partner agreements in taking specific actions to progress projects and to bring them under a coherent growth programme that could be articulated for the district. The representatives from GOSE and CLG were impressed with the positive regeneration opportunities outlined for Dover and the strength of the partnership that is already in place.

Kent Regeneration Board

86. SEEDA is participating in ongoing discussions and consultations with partners in Kent to shape the creation of a new strengthened sub-regional partnership. Plans to create a Kent Business Advisory Board are expected to be finalised in the autumn. The Business Advisory Board will represent private sector input on regeneration and economic development matters to a revamped Kent Regeneration Board. The new arrangements will seek to carry forward the work articulated in the KCC Regeneration Strategy which is also in development.

Thames Gateway Kent Multi Area Agreement

87. The Thames Gateway Kent Partnership (TGKP) has been working closely with GOSE to secure £100,000 to help take the Multi Area Agreement (MAA) forward. In addition, they have secured the secondment of Richard Longman of CLG to work on the MAA who previously worked on the Partnership for Urban Southampton MAA. Kent County Council are also contributing a part time secondee to work on the MAA, who will particularly focus on housing.
88. The main focus of the MAA will be on three themes - skills, transport and housing. Business support and innovation may also feature and work is exploring how best to make those linkages. Governance and delegation issues will also be an important element for the MAA.

STRATEGIC INFLUENCE

Regional Employment and Skills Summit

89. The Regional Employment and Skills Summit took place on 8 July 2008 at Gatwick and attracted over 130 delegates, including a significant number of private and public sector employers. Organised by SEEDA and regional partners and hosted by the Regional Minister, Jonathan Shaw MP, the event began with a national and regional perspective on the employment and skills agendas from Jim Brathwaite, Jonathan Shaw, the Rt Hon Stephen Timms MP and Norman Boyland, Chair of the regional Learning and Skills Council (LSC). A number of employers then gave interesting and useful insights on how they are translating policy into practice. The afternoon focused on facilitated table discussions on issues around:

- Employability, employer engagement and employer and employee entitlement
 - Preparing for raising the age for participation in education and training
 - Improving business performance through skills development including higher level skills and green skills.
90. Some strong 'Messages to Government' came out of these discussions and were fed back to the Regional Skills for Productivity Alliance at its 16 July meeting. Outcomes from the Summit are being fed back to Government and will be used to inform the work of regional partners over the coming year.
91. The Summit was not a one-off event but part of a journey towards a more integrated, simplified and demand-led employment and skills agenda and Jonathan Shaw MP has confirmed that he would like to run another event in a year's time to demonstrate progress. Feedback is therefore being obtained from delegates and other interested parties on how they would like to continue to be involved in taking forward the agenda.
92. The web link to access Summit presentations and documents is:
http://www.seeda.co.uk/News_&_Events/Event_Reports/2008_Events/Regional_Employment_&_Skills_Summit/index.asp.

South East Employment and Skills Accord

93. In July SEEDA, the Learning and Skills Council SE and Jobcentre Plus SE signed up to an Accord setting out their commitment to working together towards achieving a simpler and better integrated employment and skills system. This is a significant achievement in our aim to better join up the employment and skills agendas. As an initial, practical, step a multi-agency task and finish group has been set up in Urban South Hampshire to determine how the three agencies can work with their individual targets to join programmes together to support the Multi Area Agreement and in doing so, identify where there is a need for flexibilities in the system. They will also be working together in the Thames Gateway where the focus will be on the worklessness agenda.

Gatwick Diamond

94. The Sussex Area Team continues to actively support the Gatwick Diamond Steering group. The steering group is a business led public – private partnership which has a vision that “by 2016, the Gatwick Diamond will be a world class, internationally recognised business location achieving sustainable prosperity”.
95. An international benchmarking study has recently been completed and the Future Plan identifies 3 strategic initiatives:
- Inspire – inspiring knowledge to enhance skills, productivity and innovation

SEEDA is actively involved with key partners to enable businesses and individual's access to higher education in the Gatwick Diamond and to develop a skills escalator through Further and Higher Education collaboration.

- Connect – improving facilities and transport connections by encouraging investment

A key objective is to develop a new strategic alliance with BAA Gatwick and ensure their £800 million investment in the Gatwick Terminal will benefit both business and the wider community.

SEEDA responded quickly to the recent announcement by the Office of Rail Regulation (ORR) to reduce the investment from Network Rail from £30 million to £9 million for the Gatwick Airport Station improvements. A reduction of this size would have serious implications to the scale of the proposed refurbishments. A decision announcement from ORR is expected late October 08.

SEEDA is tracking the implications of the Competition Commission report that recommended BAA sell two of the London owned airports and the likely impact that this will have on Gatwick.

- Grow – smart growth to build the reputation as an economic powerhouse, but achieved in sustainable way, safeguarding quality of life and the countryside.

The 6 Local Authorities across the Gatwick Diamond are working with a consultancy company, GVA Grimley to further coordinate the strategic planning across the Diamond area

96. An integral part of the Future Plan was to review the leadership and governance arrangements for the Gatwick Diamond as it moves forward. The Area Team is working very closely with partners to ensure that appropriate structures are in place.
97. A first SEEDA Internal Taskforce meeting is currently being planned for late September to consider and agree a joined up approach across the agency that will support the delivery of the Future Plan.

New Rural Board

98. A selection panel led by SEEDA Board Member John Peel is in the process of appointing a Chair of the new regional Rural Board. This person will lead the Rural Board in devising and implementing a Single Rural Strategy for the region. Board members are being appointed in parallel. It is expected that the first meeting of the new Board will take place in early October. The newly created Rural Board will work with a revised South East Rural Forum to provide stronger linkages in to Local Authorities and Local Strategic Partnerships.

Weston Otmoor Eco Town

99. On the 31 July Caroline Flint, Minister for Department of Communities & Local Government (DCLG), visited Bicester for a discussion on the potential Eco Town site at Weston Otmoor in Cherwell District,

Oxfordshire. Presentations were given by potential developers Parkridge, followed by Oxfordshire County Council and Cherwell District Council. Ms Flint then chaired a useful debate between parties. SEEDA were invited to attend and provided a brief update on our position regarding the proposed Weston Otmoor Eco Town during the round table discussion. SEEDA are actively working with all parties and have commissioned a study (funded by DCLG) into the potential impact of the Weston Otmoor development on Bicester, the existing town adjacent to the proposed Eco Town site. The effect on Bicester is a key concern for the Local Authorities of Oxfordshire County and Cherwell District, the outcome of the study is expected by October 2008.

Milton Keynes South Midlands Growth Area (MKSM)

100. MKSM working groups have been agreed and SEEDA is the lead RDA for the MKSM Executive Board (representing the RDAs from East of England and East Midlands). SEEDA is currently leading on a mapping exercise of RDA investment and major developments planned in MKSM. This links closely with the development of an economic development strategy for MKSM, which is being developed from work initiated by SEEDA. SEEDA have been working with Milton Keynes Council, East Midlands Development Agency (EMDA) and the East of England Development Agency (EEDA) to progress work in developing the economic aspects of a Multi Area Agreement (MAA) covering the MKSM Growth Area.

National Enterprise Academy in Buckinghamshire

101. SEEDA are working in partnership with National Enterprise Academy (Peter Jones Foundation) and Buckinghamshire County Council (BCC) to progress the establishment of a National Enterprise Academy (NEA) in Buckinghamshire. Currently the partnership is working to identify the most suitable site for the Head Quarters of the National Enterprise Academy. The partnership has agreed to set up a Joint Programme Board with a single project team reporting to all three partners (SEEDA, NEA and BCC). One option currently being considered is to combine the development of the NEA Head Quarters with the regeneration of Aylesbury Town Centre. SEEDA are supporting the project by providing support and advice regarding site development and master planning.

Solent Waterfront Strategy Launch

102. The Solent Waterfront Strategy was launched on 29 July by Jonathan Shaw, Marine and Fisheries Minister and Minister for the South East. The Strategy establishes the importance of the sector and its significance to the economy. The main aim is to support the marine industry by safeguarding strategic waterfront land sites for business growth. Coastal Local Authorities have been consulted and encouraged

to support the Strategy. The need to address the marine skills shortage is also emphasised.

103. The Strategy is already having a significant impact - the recently published South East Plan states that marine industry sites identified through the Strategy "should be safeguarded in the relevant Local Development Documents" and Business Southampton are joining forces with employers and stakeholders to campaign for the new Marine Management Organisation, announced in the recent Marine Bill, to be located in Southampton.