

**SOUTH EAST ENGLAND REGIONAL ASSEMBLY
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

Date: 19 October 2007

Subject: **Regional Planning Committee - 26 September 2007**

Report of: Chairman of the Regional Planning Committee

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the Committee notes the contents of this report.

Purpose of Report:

To update the Executive Committee on the meeting of the Regional Planning Committee held on 26 September 2007.

1. Member Workshop: Examination in Public Panel Report and Housing Green Paper

- 1.1 Members of the Regional Planning Committee, the Regional Housing Board and Regional Transport Board were invited to a workshop before the committee formally proceeded. This allowed them an opportunity to have an informal discussion on the key recommendations arising from the Panel Report and the Government's Housing Green Paper which covers some related issues. Both were considered by the Executive Committee on 14 September.

2. South East Plan: EiP Panel Report

- 2.1 The Director of Planning outlined the process for responding to the Panel Report and the key issues that the Executive had already raised in the Assembly's initial response, agreed on the 14 September. The Committee noted the response and the request to consider whether there are any additional points that need to be made at this stage in the process. Whilst no additional substantial points were raised, Members felt that in order to inform the debate at the plenary meeting in November, all Assembly Members should be asked to submit questions in advance. It was agreed though that this should not limit the opportunity to raise issues / ask questions on the day.

3. Housing Type and Size in the South East

- 3.1 Earlier this year the Assembly commissioned (jointly with SEEDA) consultants DTZ to undertake a study looking at what type and size of housing was being built in the South East and what the implications of this might be now and in the future. This shows a shift towards building smaller homes and flats. Although not of immediate concern for the private sector, this is already impacting on the supply of affordable housing where the need is predominantly for family homes. The Committee considered the proposed actions for the Assembly arising out of this research, some of which will be taken forward by the RPC and some by the Regional Housing Board.

4. Regional Sustainability Framework Consultation

- 4.1 The draft Regional Sustainability Framework (RSF), which has been prepared under the guidance of a high level steering group (the Sustainable Futures Group), has been published for consultation (until 26 November). The Committee had a presentation on the draft strategy from Patrick Feehily, the Sustainable Development Coordinator, and was asked to suggest any changes that could be taken into account through the consultation process. Apart from some small suggested changes to wording (mainly for clarification purposes), we were happy to endorse this. The Executive will also be asked to consider the RSF at this meeting (Agenda Item 8).

5. LDF Conformity - Proposed New Arrangements

- 5.1 The Committee was asked to agree a change in the way that the Assembly manages its LDF conformity role. The result of this would be that more could be dealt with through delegation powers (of the Chief Executive), with only the LDFs that raise possible non-conformity issues being dealt with by the sub-group. This would reduce the amount of time that Members have to spend on the process and would allow more time for Assembly officers to spend on supporting Local Planning Authorities earlier on in the LDF preparation process. This approach was supported by the Committee.

6. White Paper - Delivering a Sustainable Railway

- 6.1 The Committee was asked to agree a response to the Government's consultation which sets out a 30 year strategy for rail and contains parameters for rail spending between 2009 and 2014. Detailed spending on particular schemes is not included unless deemed to be of fundamental importance to the strategy. These will be dealt with through Network Rail's strategic business plan, due to be published in spring 2008. Members agreed the proposed response, subject to some changes to strengthen references to the South East's global economic role and the need to support our spatial priorities to reflect this; and to strengthen references to East-West Rail. The Committee also agreed to submit this as evidence to the House of Commons Transport Committee inquiry into the long term strategy for the railways.

7. South West Gypsy and Traveller Partial Review Draft Revision Submission Consultation

- 7.1 This is the second regional review of Gypsy and Traveller provision being progressed by Regional Assemblies, with the East of England leading the way on reviews. The South East is next to take this work forward, with a consultation due to take place next spring. No major issues were raised and the Committee agreed the response.

Cllr Moira Gibson
Chairman of the Regional Planning Committee

5 October 2007