

**SOUTH EAST ENGLAND DEVELOPMENT AGENCY**

**BOARD MEETING 6 DECEMBER 2007**

**ITEM 13**

**AGENCY REPORT**

**Recommendation**

The Board is invited to **NOTE** the agency activity report for November and December, which represents a cross section of reports from within SEEDA organised according to the themes of SEEDA's Corporate Plan.

**A. STRATEGIC INFLUENCING**

**Thames Gateway**

1. A joint GSE RDA Board Meeting was held on 11<sup>th</sup> October. The focus of discussions was the Thames Gateway and the joint RDAs draft Economic Development Investment Plan (EDIP), as well as wider Greater South East issues. An 'in principle' agreement was reached at this meeting to establish a joint East England Development Agency (EEDA)/London Development Agency (LDA) /SEEDA Board Committee on the Thames Gateway. The practical arrangements and implications of taking forward this agreement are now being addressed and fully scoped for further consideration by the individual RDA Boards.
2. A successful workshop on the GSE RDAs draft Economic Development Investment Plan (EDIP) was held for partners on 30<sup>th</sup> October. The draft plan was well received and this event, together with other one-to-one consultations with some key partners, has provided useful feedback that will help shape the final investment plan due to be published in January 2008.
3. Detailed discussions have been taking place between the RDA Chief Executives and CLG's Thames Gateway Executive on financial contributions to deliver the economic transforming initiatives proposed in the RDA's draft EDIP.
4. The GSE RDAs are coming together to present our joint pan Gateway proposals for the future economic regeneration of the Thames Gateway at the Thames Gateway Forum on the 28<sup>th</sup>/29<sup>th</sup> November.

**Redundancy Support Service (RSS)**

5. In November, DTZ completed an evaluation of the Redundancy Support Service (RSS). Since October 2003, SEEDA in partnership with Jobcentre Plus have run the Redundancy Support Service to meet the needs of all those who are either 'under threat' or 'under notice' of redundancy, in particular SMEs. It provides a rapid, coherent and effective response to redundancies, working with people who have been notified that they are facing redundancy whilst they are still in work, aiming to move them quickly into different jobs. This approach prevents people from becoming detached from the labour market and entering the benefits system and enabling individuals to remain economically active.

6. Between October 2003 & March 2007 the project has safeguarded 220 Jobs, assisted 22,178 people to get a job, and created 74 businesses. The expected outputs for the current financial year are to safeguard 40 Jobs, assist 5,000 to get a job and create 8 businesses.
7. The Key Findings of the evaluation were:
  - Of businesses supported through the programme, 4 in 10 are in manufacturing;
  - Just under a third of assisted beneficiaries are in companies with less than 250 employees;
  - The programme is a significant contributor of employment support for SEEDA, contributing 92% and 69% to the relevant SEEDA targets in 2006 and 2007 respectively;
  - For 2 out of 3 of businesses, the RSS offers a unique service in the market;
  - The RSS brokers have built up good partnerships with local agencies and support the work delivered by other agencies in particular Next Steps, Local Authorities, SEEDA IDMs, SEEDA Area Teams etc;
  - Politically the brokers have provided SEEDA with a response to redundancies, particularly demonstrating to MPs the co-ordinated agency response.
8. The current project is due to end in March 2008, but two brokers will be retained to develop a core offer to businesses that could be potentially added to the Business Link portfolio. It will also continue the vital role of providing support for SMEs in the South East who are making people redundant.

#### **South East Cultural Shift Partnership:**

9. Cultural Shift South East is a Second Round EQUAL partnership established to encourage a culture of social entrepreneurship across the public, private and voluntary and community sectors. The Cultural Shift South East Programme has had continued success with mainstreaming and dissemination. SEEDA led the Third Angle Transnational Partnership's two day international debate and celebration event with international policy experts and government officials on 24<sup>th</sup>/25<sup>th</sup> October 2007. SEEDA used this opportunity to influence Government and the European Commission to integrate Social Enterprise definitions into wider SME development policy.
10. SEEDA, working with the Cultural Shift Sector Groups, has developed a Strategic Policy Framework within the areas of Health and Social Care and Regeneration. Reports in these areas will be published in December and will influence future work with Social Enterprise in these sectors.

#### **Creating a Pathway to a Zero Waste region:**

11. SEEDA has been active on a number of fronts developing a material resource efficient economy in the region. Following the publication of the Waste Strategy 2007 by Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) in May, SEEDA's Waste Market Development Group held a workshop at Aylesford Newsprint in September to discuss how South East councils and third sector organisations should work together to tackle business waste issues as part of the RES Implementation Plan priority to improve overall resource efficiency.

12. The workshop informed the development of a joint SEEDA/Environment Agency/Waste and Resource Action Programme (WRAP) proposal to pilot the concept of a Zero Waste region in the South East. This was submitted to DEFRA in September 2007 and requests funding from the Business Resource Efficiency and Waste (BREW) fund to take forward the concept.
13. SEEDA was a key contributor to the fourth annual Regional Waste Summit held in Reading in November 2007. The conference theme was on delivering waste and resource management capacity (including infrastructure) in the region. The facilitation of infrastructure provision had been identified as a role for RDAs in Waste Strategy 2007.

### **Sustainable Business Strategy**

14. In 2006-07, SEEDA placed a team of Sustainable Business Advisers within the Business Links to mainstream sustainability within the Business Link offering. The Advisors have now been in operation for six months and the team has delivered almost 1,200 Business Supports on Resource Efficiency and just under 1,000 Business Supports on Corporate Social Responsibility.

### **Partnership review**

15. The four sub regional partnerships in MKOBB are now taking shape with local partners driving forward SEEDA's agenda to streamline and simplify partnership structures. In the Thames Valley, the Berkshire Local Authorities have come together to develop a joint proposal for a Thames Valley Strategy Board which will have overall responsibility for the sub regional elements of the Regional Economic Strategy.

### **Culture**

#### *Table Tennis Grand Prix*

16. SEEDA has been influential in securing the Medway Open Butterfly Table Tennis Grand Prix. The national tournament, which takes place on 1<sup>st</sup>/2<sup>nd</sup> December, has been over-subscribed and will feature a 180 players, including international players and some of the UK's best talent. SEEDA has encouraged Medway Council to work with local table tennis clubs and leagues, and with partners from the leisure and tourism sector, to maximise the benefits of hosting an event of this scale.

#### *Badminton*

17. SEEDA has helped secure another key badminton event in the region. Following the success of the 12<sup>th</sup> Yehlex English National Veterans' Championships, it has been agreed that Olympos, Burgess Hill, West Sussex, will stage this year's 13<sup>th</sup> Yehlex English National Veterans Championship from Friday, 30<sup>th</sup> November – 2<sup>nd</sup> December.

#### *Culture and Sport Toolkit*

18. The Culture and Sport Toolkit for Local Area Agreements has been launched on the Southeast Cultural Observatory: ([www.seco.org.uk/laatoolkit](http://www.seco.org.uk/laatoolkit)) The toolkit's purpose is to support Local Strategic Partnerships to embed culture and sport within their Local Area Agreement, and to raise awareness of the important contribution that culture and sport can bring to community life.

## **B. SUSTAINABLE ECONOMIC GROWTH**

### **WORLD CLASS INNOVATION**

#### **Sector Consortia**

19. A study group from the Pomeranian region of Poland visited SEEDA and four of the Sector Consortia to get a deeper understanding of the thinking behind the Sector Consortia model and how it works in practice. The group identified the SEEDA Sector Consortia model as one of great interest due to the business driven approach, and wished to understand more to inform their current joint project financed from EU structural funds to stimulate innovation in the Pomeranian region.

#### **Business+**

20. Business+ is a graduate placement programme currently being piloted by SEEDA. Based upon the principles of Knowledge Transfer Partnerships (KTPs), Business+ offers shorter term placements (between 3 - 12 months) for SMEs that have little or no prior significant interaction with the knowledge base.
21. A number of projects have been funded under the scheme, ranging from food technology, chemistry and engineering to marketing. Experience is showing that this programme is meeting a demand from business that KTP cannot currently address. In a number of cases, the interactions initiated through Business+ have lead to further engagement and a strengthening relationship between the participants.
22. The knowledge that SEEDA is gaining from this project will prove invaluable in the light of the Sainsbury Review recommendations (subject to the outcomes of the Business Support Simplification Programme) for increased support for more flexible KTPs - and in particular a "mini-KTP" product to be made available in all regions.

#### **Greater South East – Innovation Map**

23. Building on the London Innovation Map developed by LDA, SEEDA and EEDA have supported the extension of the map to cover the Greater South East (GSE) area. [www.innovationmap.org](http://www.innovationmap.org) is one of the first projects to demonstrate a joined up approach from the pan-regional alliance to promote innovation and greater collaboration between universities and business in the Greater South East. Launched in October, the map has been created to demonstrate the scale and impact of innovation activities, facilities and support available. It is a visual web tool, offering a search by postcode or keyword of a database listing initially over 200 organisations including universities and business support organisations. Search results present the organisations on Google Maps, a powerful and flexible way to display geographical information. It is intended to provide supporting information to intermediaries, RDA initiatives and UKTI teams.

#### **Innovation Lead role**

##### *Sainsbury Review response and RDA-TSB links*

24. SEEDA has prepared a response to the Sainsbury Review on behalf of the RDAs. The Review recognises the regional role for innovation and encourages

more regional support for science and innovation. The RDAs support the leadership role for innovation of the Technology Strategy Board (TSB) and the partnership between the Board and the RDAs (including an alignment of £180 million of RDA funding over 3 years). SEEDA has prepared a model for the relationship between the RDAs and the TSB including a Strategic Advisory Group on which Regional Science and Innovation Councils (such as South East Science Engineering Technology Advisory Council SESETAC) will be represented.

### **Global Medical Excellence Cluster**

25. SEEDA have partially funded SEHTA (the sector consortia for health technologies) to write the business plan (as part of the Global Medical Excellence Cluster announced by Tony Blair in December 2006 based around the Greater South East's unique combination of world class medical universities, pharmaceutical companies and leading hospitals) for a new centre for biomarkers and imaging with a focus on Alzheimer's disease. The plans are developing strongly and gaining momentum with increasing support from both the public and private sectors.

### **Thames Valley Innovation Conference - 16 October 2007, Reading**

26. The SEEDA Chairman, together with over 400 business people attended the third Innovation Conference at Green Park, Reading, hosted by Cisco. The event attracted 80 exhibitors from the Thames Valley. Innovation speakers included senior figures from Microsoft, Cisco, 3i and SEEDA.

### **Nanotechnology**

27. Surrey NanoSystems Ltd was the lead company featured in the Daily Telegraph in an article focusing on business - academic collaboration on 9<sup>th</sup> October. Surrey NanoSystems Ltd is a "spin out" company from the University of Surrey in a project receiving SEEDA funding. It was formed to exploit a very advanced new technique for the controlled growth of carbon nanotubes.

### **Innovation and Creativity**

#### *Finance South East*

28. Finance South East has recently reported its first flotation of one of its clients, Probability Games, on the AIM market of the London Stock Exchange. This ambitious mobile gaming company capitalised at approximately £13.7 million when shares started trading on 24<sup>th</sup> August 2006. Probability Games was founded in April 2003 and operates gaming services for mobile phone users. A key benefit of Probability Games is that users do not need access to a PC internet connection to register, play or pay. The successful growth of Probability Games was part funded by Finance South East's Accelerator Fund.

#### *UKBI Conference*

29. SEEDA sponsored the UK Business Incubation International Conference on the 29<sup>th</sup> November in Brighton. The conference entitled "Business Incubation, Innovation & Entrepreneurship - the Global Challenge, attracts delegates from across the world. The Enterprise Hub Network will be hosting a number of conference sessions and SEEDA will be giving the welcome speech during the morning.

### *High Growth Coaching Programme*

30. The high growth coaches have been working intensively with 20 companies over the last 10 months by working with their management teams, extending their business models and product offerings and stretching their goals. The national evaluation of the high growth coaching programme is underway and impact data for the pilot is being collected. Data from other regions that are further ahead shows a return on public funding of around 10:1.

### *Enterprise Hub Network*

31. An innovative transport sound system, "Soundscape", produced by Sittingbourne Hub client Turning Points Ltd, has been purchased by Norway's second largest transport company, Tide coaches, for its Bergen-based sightseeing operation. The company won the Kent Innovation Challenge, sponsored by SEEDA in 2003 and has received intensive support from the Enterprise Hub.
32. Oxfordshire Enterprise Hub company Polymertronics, a nanotechnology start-up, secured £225,000 of investment earlier this year - combining £150,000 from a business angel and £75,000 from a Research and Development Grant. Polymertronics was introduced to its new investor by Thames Valley Investment Network (TVIN) sponsored by SEEDA, a business angel investment network specialising in helping growing companies to raise funding. This Hub Company also won the The Best New Technology Company award at the Martin & Audrey Wood Enterprise Awards 2007 in May at Oxford University's Said Business School.

### **International**

33. SEEDA has secured 10 foreign direct investments which will create 227 jobs over the next 3 years. Other activities included:

#### *Thames Valley IT Human Resources Forum*

34. SEEDA has developed a human resources forum in the Thames Valley, focused on IT companies, to address key concerns, address barriers to business and identify new opportunities. Members include Oracle, Cisco, Microsoft and Vodafone.

#### *SAPA (formerly Alcoa)*

35. This aluminum extrusion company has announced the closure of its site in Banbury next year with the loss of 340 jobs. The company has been hit hard by cheaper imports, particularly from China. SEEDA is working with SAPA's senior management team on training assistance and are signposting the HR team to companies in the region that are looking to expand.

#### *Carbon Footprint Event*

36. In partnership with Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce, the Carbon Trust and Envirobusiness, SEEDA organised a major seminar at Henley Management College aimed at corporates interested in reducing their Carbon Footprint. Speakers included the Carbon Trust and companies such as Siemens that have implemented energy saving practices and who were keen to share their experiences. Companies that attended include Porsche Cars, DHL, Kraft Foods and Yell.

### *French Lyon ICT Mission*

37. SEEDA hosted a mission of 11 French ICT companies interested in developing their business across the channel and setting up operations in the South East. To showcase the strengths of the ICT cluster in the region, presentations were given by ICT companies established in the South East, the University of Reading, SEEDA, the Innovation Advisory Service and UK Trade and Investment (UKTI). Two companies have indicated a definite interest in setting up expanding their activities to the South East.

*Finnish Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) Mission*

38. SEEDA hosted a mission of 16 RFID focused companies and organisations including Finnish universities, the Finnish Defence Force, a technology and innovation agency and companies such as Nokia. The primary purpose of the mission was to provide information on the RFID sector in the South East, including current R&D and projects in the logistics, retail and manufacturing sectors. As a result, the mission has realised some promising inward investment leads and a significant network has been formed for further collaboration.

*UK Technologies for Homeland Security Conference – Chicago and Ottawa*

39. SEEDA co-sponsored two high profile conferences in Chicago and Ottawa which focused on the trade and investment opportunities for British and North American companies in the security sector. SEEDA presented at the events alongside UK companies such as QinetiQ, BT and BAe and are following up with 9 companies regarding setting up their operation in the UK. Over 200 companies attended these events including Boeing, Raytheon, Northrop Grumman and Thales.

*Fuel Cell Seminar and Exhibition, San Antonio, US*

40. SEEDA partnered with UKTI and Scottish Development International to exhibit at this premier global event in San Antonio, Texas. The event enabled a number of companies and universities including BAC2, Ilika Technologies, QinetiQ, Fuel Cell Markets and the University of Southampton to show case their strengths and capabilities in this growing sector. SEEDA is now working with a number of companies to assist them with developing partnerships and setting up operations in the South East.

*Recruitment of Overseas Representatives*

41. SEEDA and South West Regional Development Agency (SWRDA) have jointly appointed a representative in India to support the activities of both agencies in the market. The representative will be based at the British Deputy High Commission in Mumbai.
42. SEEDA has appointed a new vice president on the US West Coast. The representative will operate in the San Francisco Bay area and work closely with SEEDA's Southern California representative and the UKTI team at the British Consulate General in San Francisco.

## **COMPETITIVE ENTERPRISE**

## **Business Support Simplification Programme**

43. SEEDA, along with two other RDAs, is working with BERR, CLG, DEFRA and representatives from Local Authorities to develop a national framework that will guide the RDA and Government Department Transition Plans. RDAs and Departments will use the plans to move from existing business support arrangements to simplified arrangements from April 2008 to the end of 2010, when the simplification process should be complete.
44. SEEDA is holding one of four regional workshops, on 12<sup>th</sup> December, to bring together publicly funded business support funders and providers to inform the development of the national Business Support Simplification branding guidelines

## **Developing a New National Enterprise Strategy**

45. Hosted by James Brathwaite SEEDA's Chairman, SEEDA ran a highly successful event in Slough on 24<sup>th</sup> October, enabling the BERR Minister for Competitiveness, Stephen Timms, to hear the views of 50 SME business owners on the Government's policies for encouraging entrepreneurship and supporting SMEs. The event was part of the series of BERR regional roadshows designed to inform the development of a new national Enterprise Strategy. The businesses identified barriers to growth, such as accessing finance, recruiting skilled staff and coping with the increasing burden of regulation and suggested ways that Government could help businesses overcome them. In particular mentoring featured as a favoured option for SMEs.
46. Following the roadshows, RDA Chairs discussed how to continue to help shape the Strategy and have agreed with Ministers that SEEDA will co-Chair (with BERR) an Enterprise Policy 'Task and Finish' group, to be instigated immediately, that will report to Chairs and Ministers.

## **GROW Programme**

47. Over 120 Business leaders and policy makers from five high-growth European regions came together on 18<sup>th</sup> October in Brussels to discuss the results of the GROW programme. The conference showcased the 16 successful partner projects and over 82 organisations and companies participating in GROW. SEEDA is leading the development of the GROW II bid under the new funding programme INTERREG IVc.

## **Business Link**

48. SEEDA's Board recently reviewed progress to date of the Business Link model in the South East. Business Link is working with Local Authorities in respect of their LAAs, for example, Business Link in Sussex, hosted successful events for local and district authorities to raise levels of awareness about BSSP (Business Support Simplification Programme), in particular to seek local stakeholders' buy-in to Business Link as the primary access channel.

## **New delivery model for the Enterprise Gateways Programme**

49. A new delivery model for the Enterprise Gateways Programme and continued funding up to March 2010 was approved by SEEDA in September 2007. The Programme will be delivered through Business Link.
50. Each of the 10 Gateway zones is currently working on an implementation plan which will identify 'priority' areas within the region with the highest level of underperformance. In each zone, these areas will be covered by outreach workers with a Director playing a central coordinating role.

### **Women's Enterprise Day - 14<sup>th</sup> November**

51. On 14<sup>th</sup> November a Road Show was held in Westminster with the Minister of State for Competitiveness, Stephen Timms MP, chaired by Pam Alexander, to consult with 50 female business owners on the issues and challenges they face and what the Government can do to support them. Mentoring and the need for visible business support (many women didn't know the extent of the support currently offered) were key items that arose from the discussions. This Road Show formed one of many that the Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform (BERR) is undertaking to feed into a new Government Framework for Enterprise.

### **Women's Enterprise Task Force**

52. The fourth meeting of the national Women's Enterprise Task Force, co-chaired by Pam Alexander, took place on 15<sup>th</sup> November. The focus for the meeting was the Task Force input into the new Enterprise Framework; mentoring and coaching, supplier diversity and support from the banking sector were all high on the agenda.

### **Ethnic Minority Business Task Force**

53. The newly established Ethnic Minority Business Task Force, which is co-chaired and managed by Yorkshire Forward, had their first meeting on 12<sup>th</sup> November 2007. SEEDA has observer status on this Task Force and their key objectives are around strategic influencing and access to finance and procurement / access to new markets. These mirror the priorities of the Women's Enterprise Task Force and the two groups will be working together to achieve maximum impact.

### **Enterprise Week 12<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> November**

54. Taking a more strategic role in Enterprise Week this year, SEEDA has concentrated on bringing together enterprise partners, businesses and schools to create higher impact events that will build on a yearly basis, rather than continued sponsorship of smaller, one-off events.
55. This year, SEEDA has increased the number of companies, businesses, schools, colleges and Higher Education Institutions putting on events in the South East from 300 in 2006 to over 500 registered events in 2007, nearly double last year's figures. Examples of SEEDA activity during Enterprise Week are:

### *Future Face of Enterprise*

56. Board member Alex Pratt attended the launch of Enterprise Week at the "Future Face of Enterprise" with Clare Williams and Christina Hartshorn where ministers including Rt. Hon. John Hutton MP, Phil Hope MP and Rt. Hon. Stephen Timms MP spoke of government's commitment to enterprise culture and education and joined other leading enterprising businesses in a debate on the future of enterprise in the UK.

#### *Building Partnerships*

57. The Mark Magazine, produced by SEEDA, is a publication specifically for young people and provides case studies / regional role models of young entrepreneurs and their supporters. It is an integral part of the year-long strategy for developing enterprise capability in young people that also includes work with schools and colleges. The Magazine was distributed at Enterprise Week to all secondary schools, Further Education and Higher Education Institutions in the SEEDA region to celebrate Enterprise Week.

#### *Canterbury Christ Church University*

58. Canterbury Christ Church University in Kent linked up with local businesses and schools and enterprise education partners to put on 5 events during Enterprise Week. From women's enterprise to business start ups and the importance of ideas and innovation they covered most areas of enterprise.

#### *Role Models and Ambassadors*

59. SEEDA is also using networks of young entrepreneurs in the region to promote the message of enterprise. Jack Forester, from Youth Enterprise Southeast network (YES) in Brighton together with Heather Wilkinson from Striding Out in Kent (another networking entrepreneur) hosted a networking event in Brighton to help bring together young people in Sussex interested in starting up their own businesses to hear the journeys of two of Sussex's most successful entrepreneurs. Business Link, amongst other financial support advisors, were on hand to offer advice at the end of the event.
60. These are only a flavour of what happened in Enterprise Week across the SE this year. A more thorough listing of events can be found at [www.enterpriseweek.org](http://www.enterpriseweek.org)

### **New HEEG (Higher Education Entrepreneurship Group) Chair & Annual Dinner**

61. The new HEEG Chair Dr David Stokes, whose election was announced in late September 2007 hosted the HEEG Annual Dinner on 30<sup>th</sup> October 2007 at Farnham Castle.
62. The Dinner was an opportunity for the Group to celebrate a year of regional collaboration in entrepreneurship education. It was also a chance for the invited guests – HEEG members, representatives from Student Enterprise bodies, careers services, and business support organisations involved in the national entrepreneurship agenda – to discuss the future of HEEG in the context of three issues seen as very significant to entrepreneurship education:
- The national and international context;
  - Evaluation of the impact and monitoring of activities;
  - The relationship with the employer engagement agenda and the development of skills for the workplace as signalled in the Leitch Review.

63. Lorna Collins from the National Council for Graduate Entrepreneurship (NCGE) and Simon Brown from UK Science Enterprise Sectors (UKSEC) gave guests a national perspective on developments in entrepreneurship education. The HEEG Annual Dinner also provided a platform for the launch of the next round of the Make a Difference (MAD) Ideas Competition which is now open for entrants.

#### **Local Skills for Productivity Alliance (LSPA)**

64. The South East LSPA model has been selected as a case study by CFE (formerly known as the Centre for Enterprise) as an example of how an Employment and Skills Board may look. CFE has been commissioned by the Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform (BERR), the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills (DIUS), the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and Communities and Local Government (CLG) to advise on the function and form of Employment and Skills Boards, announced in the Leitch Review of Skills.
65. CFE has undertaken in depth interviews with members of the Hampshire, Surrey and Kent LSPAs. The consultants have been particularly interested in LSPA practice relating to employer engagement, Higher Education, Employability and linkages with Local Area Agreements.

#### **Funding for two new LSPA projects**

66. In the past month, two further LSPA projects have been initiated. In Kent, the LSPA is sponsoring a 'Shepway Compact' involving six secondary schools in Shepway to raise the numbers of students attending Higher Education Institutions, especially those in Kent. Teacher representatives and learning mentors from all six schools will attend a training programme to deliver the compact and achieve National Open College Network (NOCN) Internal verifier award level 3 accreditation. The long term aim of the project is to retain high level skills in the Kent area and create a student mentor network, and links to Kent 14-19 Strategy "Home Grown Graduates".
67. In Hampshire, the LSPA is running a project to enhance customer care in Southampton and its environs. The Welcome to Excellence suite (menu of training courses) will form the basis of this project. The purpose is to ensure that Southampton maximises the economic and promotional benefit from 2012 and offers visitors to the city the warmest welcome. Improving the standard of customer care amongst those who come into contact with visitors will be vital.
68. Outcomes will include 50 people receiving NCFE Certification and 200 people receiving training in customer care. In addition the Hampshire and Isle of Wight LSPA is working with its Local Strategic Partnerships to influence Local Area Agreements.

#### **East Kent Skills reviewed**

69. Learning and Skills has been identified as a key priority for East Kent to be addressed through the new four-District Local Strategic Partnership (LSP). The LSPA has been helping in the production of a Learning and Skills Action Plan for East Kent. This is the product of extensive research and consultation, aiming to set out key priorities for action for the period 2008 – 2016.

## **Preparing Young People and Adults for an Enterprising Future**

70. SEEDA and the National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts (NESTA) are working in partnership to help education institutions in preparing young people and adults for an enterprising future.
71. The Mackinnon Partnership has been commissioned to undertake a study to explore the demand for a staff development programme of enterprise education in the South East Further Education sector. The study follows on from existing research, and will help understand and address some of the key challenges identified by a regional audit of provision carried out earlier this year.
72. Findings from the audit indicate that tailored support is needed in order for colleges to take full advantage of the benefits offered by enterprise education approaches. As a first step a demand study will explore the level and nature of demand for a professional development experience that will enable senior FE staff to develop institutional capacity and capability in this area. This study will explore the feasibility of such a programme as well as gather opinions surrounding the likely barriers to participation and how these might be overcome.

## **Medway Learning & Skills Plan**

73. Medway Council launched their draft Learning & Skills Plan for consultation on 26<sup>th</sup> September. This Plan outlines the measures needed to 'drive a wholesale improvement in the skills levels of the current and future population of Medway over the coming years'. The Plan identifies five priorities – the coordination of business engagement; skills progression and provision; promoting the value of skills; the employability of young adults and lobbying to enable effective skills and learning provision. The proposals include focusing on the current and future needs of key sectors, including construction, creative & cultural, finance & business services, health & social care, manufacturing & engineering and retail, leisure and tourism and establishing a Medway Employment and Skills Board of key stakeholders to take forward the Plan. The consultation period ends on 26<sup>th</sup> November.

## **C. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES**

### **AREA-BASED REGENERATION**

#### **Daedalus**

##### *Airfield Closure*

74. A decision has been made to close the Daedalus airfield on the grounds of health and safety concerns about the mix of general aviation, gliding and emergency operations.
75. This decision to close was made by the airfield operator, Hampshire Constabulary in consultation with the Maritime and Coastguard Agency and SEEDA. Consultants had been commissioned by SEEDA to carry out an assessment of the short and long term management options which had indicated that the airfield was not viable in its present form.

76. The ban impacts on three small businesses and a flying club, all of whom are based on SEEDA land. Concern over the decision and the impact on business and the future of the site have been raised by MPs, local leaders and there was a debate in the House of Commons last week. Following discussions by all parties, the ban has been temporarily lifted in the hope that a way forward can be agreed. SEEDA is involved in these discussions.

#### *Masterplan*

77. Following earlier phases of consultation, SEEDA and the project team have been progressing with masterplan concepts for the site. These will be exhibited to the local community for comment on the 7 and 8 December at the Lee Methodist Church Hall, Lee-on-the-Solent. To support this event, other consultation is also being undertaken during December and January including the distribution of the first project newsletter, static displays of the masterplan options at key locations on the Gosport peninsula and meetings with key stakeholders.

#### **PUSH multilateral agreement**

78. Partnership for Urban South Hampshire (PUSH) has written to the Government Office for the South East to say that it wishes to participate in the first wave of Multi-Area Agreements (MAAs) to be developed by June 2008. The MAA will build on the PUSH Business Plan currently being worked up and the primary focus is expected to be on economic development and those aspects of housing, strategic planning and transport that support delivery of sub-regional objectives for South Hampshire. Similarly, sustainability and cultural activities might be included in the MAA.
79. PUSH's activity focuses on cross-boundary issues, or on activities that may be more effectively addressed on a multi-authority or sub-regional basis. SEEDA is very supportive of the MAA approach in South Hampshire and will be actively supporting its development in ongoing work with local authorities and key partners such as Job Centre Plus, Learning and Skills Council (LSC) and Business Link and others.

#### **London Array**

80. SEEDA has been working with partners and BBP consultancy to finalise the London Array "Big Picture" report which provides recommendations on maximising the potential employment, skills and supply-chain opportunities potentially arising from the London Array Windfarm Project in East Kent. A series of meetings are planned with a range of partners to agree how these recommendations are taken forward and the work appropriately resourced. The vision is for the development of a multi-user berth, assembly facility, testing, R&D facility for product development which will create substantial employment benefits and contribute to the overall renewable target

#### **Dover marine cluster**

81. SEEDA has been working closely with Marine SE (MSE) and key partners in Kent to begin to develop the concept of a Dover Marine Cluster which will help to shape and influence the over-arching economic development and regeneration plans of Dover, particularly on the Western Docks expansion and Waterfront Development project. There is significant potential to encourage this sector and supply chain development at this time and work is being undertaken

with the British Marine Federation who is keen to promote these opportunities to their membership. Good practice issues from the Solent via MSE are being explored for their application in East Kent.

### **Growth Point status for Dover**

82. SEEDA has recently supported Dover District Council's bid for Growth Point status which includes a proposal for 10,000 new homes. This is necessary to support a forecast of at least 4,000 new jobs, to support their economic growth forecasts and plans to ensure the development of a sustainable and vibrant town and reduce the reliance on in-commuting of skills and workforce.

### **Cruise Partnership Launch**

83. The newly formed Cruise Partnership took place aboard the iconic cruise liner, the QEII, on Friday 9<sup>th</sup> November. The Cruise Partnership has been set up to boost the tourism and visitor economy within Southampton and the Hampshire area. The focus of the Partnership will be on maximising the commercial opportunities of the Port City's burgeoning cruise industry for the benefit of the region's economy. In addition the Cruise Partnership will make travelling to Southampton a more pleasurable and rewarding experience and encourage the many thousands of passengers who travel in and out of the port terminals every year to enjoy all that Hampshire has to offer the visitor.
84. Cruise Partnership Southampton has been established by Business Southampton founded by SEEDA which also manages and facilitates activities, projects and communications for the initiative.
85. The event was well attended by key business folk and involved representatives from the many City Champions, who included Carnival (whose Southampton vessel calls include Cunard Line, P&O Cruises, Princess Cruises and Ocean Village), Royal Caribbean/Celebrity, Southampton Port (ABP), Tourism South East, Southern Marine Services, the Southampton Hoteliers Association, Southampton Airport (BAA) and Destination Southampton.
86. City Champions have already invested some £150,000 in cash and £107,000 in kind over the financial year.

## **QUALITY PLACES**

### **Chatham Maritime**

#### *Ramada Encore Hotel*

87. This 90 bedroom hotel situated next door to SEEDA's Observatory building at Chatham Maritime opened its doors to guests on 5<sup>th</sup> November. The scheme had led to the creation of 20 full-time jobs. An official opening is being held on 31<sup>st</sup> January 2008. Each room can accommodate up to two adults and two children and features an ensuite shower and satellite TV. Other features include a purpose-built meeting room for up to 18 delegates, a bar and restaurant.

### **Rochester Riverside**

#### *Site Works*

88. Water pumping remediation of gas works contamination is ongoing.

### *Shortlisted Developers, Residential Quarter*

89. The four bids from the short-listed developers for phase 1 Rochester Riverside have been considered by SEEDA and a recommendation to choose the bid from Crest/Bio Regional JVCo was taken to the Rochester Riverside Project Board (a board made up of Medway Council and SEEDA). The Project Board agreed with SEEDA that the preferred developer was the Crest/Bio Regional JVCo. The scheme is to provide a very high quality mixed use scheme of some 600 units with Code Level 6 and 'One Planet Living Brand' over part, around 100 extra or close care units, a hotel and 2366 sq m of restaurants and a similar area of offices. The appointment as Preferred Developer is subject to endorsement by Medway Council at a full council meeting.

### *Commercial/Hotel Quarter*

90. Wellbeck Land are the preferred developer on this part of the site and are currently preparing a detailed planning application. This will include plans for a hotel, conference centre, retail, office space and some residential.

### **Ashford**

91. Expressions of interest are being sought from developers and investors to bring forward the comprehensive redevelopment of SEEDA's Elwick Road site of 6.65 acres in Ashford Town Centre. It offers the potential for up to 500,000 sq ft of new floorspace for a substantial mixed-use development comprising retail, leisure facilities, offices and residential accommodation. The closing date for expressions of interest was Friday 23<sup>rd</sup> November and a meeting between SEEDA and key partners on 10<sup>th</sup> December will decide a shortlist of developers to go on to Stage 2. Ratification of that shortlist will be agreed at a meeting of the Ashford's Future Board on 13<sup>th</sup> December.

### *Special Purpose Vehicle*

92. Throughout 2007 SEEDA has been working alongside English Partnerships, Kent County Council and Ashford Borough Council to develop a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) to deliver the Ashford's Future programme. SEEDA is currently taking the lead in setting up an SPV supported by the other main public sector partners, following recommendations from CLG that they would prefer this type of delivery mechanism going forward.

### **Queenborough and Rushenden, Isle of Sheppey**

93. The masterplan for this major mixed-use scheme is now with Swale Borough Council and adoption is anticipated in the spring. SEEDA also organised a series of "Drop-In Days" so that members of the public could come and see the plans and a new scale model of the development. Approximately 400 businesses and members of the public attended the first two sessions and feedback was very positive. BBC Radio Kent broadcast live from Rushenden to promote the public consultation on the masterplan.

### **Margate**

94. Developers have been asked to come forward with plans for a new commercial development on two major town centre sites, part of the wider renaissance of this key coastal town. Through the work of the Margate Renewal Partnership, SEEDA and Thanet District Council (TDC) are seeking to find a development partner to bring forward two strategic sites extending approximately 1.77 acres between Market Street, High Street, Queen Street and Cecil Square. A shortlist

of preferred developers will be announced next year, from which a preferred scheme will be chosen. Plans will need to complement the historic and architectural qualities of the area and maximize the opportunities offered by the emerging Creative Quarter in the adjacent Old Town.

#### *Turner Contemporary*

95. SEEDA has worked closely with Kent County Council to provide constructive advice on the first Turner Contemporary Project application that was submitted in September. Further work is now being undertaken and SEEDA expect to receive a revised application at the end of November 2007. A grant of £4million is being requested. The Turner Contemporary will be a catalytic project leading to the cultural and economic regeneration of Margate and the wider area. A successful public consultation event was held at Margate in October at which the new designs for the project were unveiled by David Chipperfield. The feedback and support from the public was extremely positive.
96. SEEDA is also working with a range of partners to commission a Cultural Framework for Margate, which will help ensure effective and joined-up planning of culturally led initiatives across the town to provide the context for key projects such as The Turner Contemporary.
97. SEEDA is also funding and supporting the development of a public realm strategy for Margate which will support the success of many of the key physical development sites and ensure connectivity throughout the town.

#### **Shoreham Harbour Project**

98. Discussions are still in their infancy and detailed modeling and testing will now be carried out to demonstrate the realistic capacity of development both within the harbour and the wider area, together with the essential infrastructure/support services. The scheme is due to go before SEEDA's board in December this year for initial funding approval.

#### **Ebbsfleet International Station /Ebbsfleet Valley**

99. Kent's newest international train station opened to Eurostar passengers on Monday 19<sup>th</sup> November. Journey times include two hours and five minutes into Paris, an hour and 41 minutes to Brussels and an hour and 10 minutes to Lille. A journey from Ebbsfleet to St Pancras will take just 17 minutes when the service starts in 2009.
100. Ebbsfleet Valley has been identified as one of four key "spatial transformers" across the whole of the Thames Gateway in CLG's Thames Gateway Interim Plan Policy Framework and the three Greater South East RDAs' (SEEDA, LDA and EEDA) Draft Economic Development Investment Plan for the Thames Gateway. Ebbsfleet Valley is seen to have the potential to transform the economy in North Kent and attract high value growth business activity and employment.
101. The area will be a major new commercial centre in the heart of Kent Thameside between Dartford and Gravesend, focusing on the new International Station. There will be huge opportunities in the 300 hectares of brownfield land at Eastern Quarry and in the surrounding areas to create new high-quality mixed use communities, employment, retail, leisure and cultural facilities. Around 50,000 new jobs and 25,000 new homes are to be created in Kent Thameside in the next 20 years.

## **East Cowes**

102. The Section 106 agreement has been signed and outline planning consent has now been granted. Waitrose has been selected as the preferred food retailer who will build and occupy the supermarket to be located in the town centre.

## **Woolston Riverside**

103. Preferred developers Crest Nicholson and Dean and Dyball, are currently preparing a planning application which is due to be submitted to Southampton City Council at the end of November 2007. Discussions with Dean & Dyball and Crest Nicholson in relation to their Development Agreements are proceeding.

## **West Medina Mills**

104. Work on site investigations, environmental studies and the masterplan for the site continues to progress. SEEDA is continuing to work with solicitors to resolve the issue around the ownership of the approach road – Stag Lane.

## **Harts Farm Way - Teardrop Junction and Bedhampton Roundabout**

105. The traffic lights at Teardrop Junction have now been commissioned and all temporary traffic management removed. Resolution of Stage 3 of the safety audit is expected imminently.
106. The detailed design proposals for Bedhampton Roundabout were submitted to Hampshire County Council in June 2007. The developer (Dwyer) is waiting to receive comments from the Council on this. Once the design has been agreed, works on the roundabout can commence.

## **Transport and Infrastructure**

### *HST (High Speed Trains) and IMPACTE (Inter Modal Ports Access and Commodities Transport in Europe) Projects Eighth Call extensions*

107. The SEEDA-led projects, IMPACTE, HST integration and HST connect have recently had additional European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) funding of just over €2.38 million approved under the Eighth and final call under INTERREG IIIB. In the South East, this will provide additional funding for investment at Reading station, Ashford, Dover and Kent Thameside.
108. In Dover, there will be contributions to the work improving linkages between Dover Priory station and the town centre to counter existing physical and psychological barriers. In Reading, the additional funds will improve pedestrian and cyclist access to Reading station through improvements at key junctions. In Ashford, feasibility work will relate to urban reconfiguration and development around both sides of the international passenger station in the context of the wider development precincts outlined in the Town Centre Development Framework, including improved public realm and integration between stations and town centre. There will also be improved accessibility and marketing support of the town's "Best placed" brand. There will be work on quantifying the infrastructure needs of Kent Thameside regeneration area to accommodate maximum growth aspirations and ensuring a sustainable balance between development opportunities in Northfleet and wider transport aspects. The project will also look at the development of a longer term strategy ensuring a temporary Olympics feeder service as an integral component.

### *INTERREG IV – new project proposals*

109. On 15<sup>th</sup> October the SEEDA transport team submitted two proposals under the First Call for projects of the new INTERREG IV B programme. PRICE (Prosperous Regional Investment Corridors in Europe) brings together a partnership of 18 partners from the UK, France, Germany, Belgium and the Netherlands. This is the outcome of an intense partnership building exercise that was so successful that some potential partners had to be turned down. The total PRICE budget is €65million and the ERDF share just under €30million.
110. PRICE is focused on promoting further economic growth in places with good sustainable accessibility mainly provided by rail passenger services. PRICE is strengthening economic corridors, destinations and services connected with the TEN-T (Trans European Network–Transport) rail network in North West Europe, thus creating or enlarging sustainable, cross-sectoral market opportunities.
111. PACE (Port Access, Connectivity and Effectiveness) has a total budget of €57,990,477. Focusing on the role of ports within logistics chains and seeking to improve the effectiveness and competitiveness of our region's ports. Amongst its actions, it will develop the business case for investment in hinterland infrastructure, seek to reduce the carbon footprint of ports and share best practice in the masterplanning of ports with partners in France, Belgium and Ireland. Feedback is awaited on the submissions, with a decision expected before the end of the year.

### *SMART*

112. On the 29<sup>th</sup> of October 2007 the Department for Transport announced funding grants of more than £ 132 million to support rail freight, £42.83 million of which allocated to the SMART scheme to enhance the gauge on the key Southampton–Nuneaton corridor, thus enabling containers to be carried on standard wagons. SEEDA has been the catalyst in unlocking this Government Transport Innovation Fund Programme (TIF-P) and has provided leadership in developing third party sector funding contributions. Construction on SMART – whose core delivery partners include DfT, SEEDA and AWM in a joint RDA partnership, ABP and SCT- is expected to commence in April 2008.

### *Thames Valley*

113. SEEDA has successfully completed the first stage scoping report commissioned to Deloitte Touche on identifying transport priorities in the Thames Valley. The report achieved broad support from the business community and the public sector partners. The study lies firmly embedded in the work the new Berkshire Strategic Transport Forum is developing and moves forward the issue of M4 Capacity Increase to Heathrow. Full support from the Thames Valley Businesses has also been achieved for Airtrack. SEEDA is now working with Thames Valley Economic Partnership (TVEP) and Deloitte on a second stage study, jointly with the Highways Agency to identify the feasibility of increasing the capacity on the M4 corridor.

### **Northern Above Bar, Southampton**

114. SEEDA Board approval was granted earlier this year for this project which will transform this rundown part of Southampton's city centre with development that is primarily led by a new arts centre and an associated arts cluster in the area. Since then, work has centred on finalising designs for a central, revitalised public square, which will form the centre point for the scheme, and which are

now well advanced. Planning submission has been made for Phase 1, a mixed use scheme by City lofts which will incorporate the new arts centre, and should be determined early in the new Year. Meanwhile property acquisitions to complete site assembly for the second phase of the scheme are progressing. A cross SEEDA team is actively engaged on this project to ensure the highest levels of sustainability and emphasise the importance of the arts elements of the project.

### **Tipner Regeneration, Portsmouth**

115. Work continues with Portsmouth City Council and Tipner Regeneration Co Ltd to produce a viable masterplan for this project, which will deliver an important 50 acre mixed use development at the entrance to the city of Portsmouth. SEEDA involvement is likely to centre on infrastructure improvements that are key to the success of the project.

### **Oxford West End**

116. The transformation of this quarter of Oxford's city centre progresses on schedule. Work on producing a strategic business case is nearing completion, an Area Action Plan to guide development in the West End is currently awaiting government decision and a number of supporting strategies, such as sustainability, transport, arts etc are being developed. SEEDA is actively involved in all levels of the ongoing governance of this programme and is also working closely with Oxford City Council in considering the purchase of the most important development site within the area.