

WIDER SOUTH EAST POLITICAL STEERING GROUP (WSE PSG)

8 March 2019 AT 14:00 – 16:00 AT COMMITTEE ROOM 1, CITY HALL, LONDON

AGENDA AND PAPERS

1.	Welcome, introductions and apologies Chair: Cllr Nicolas Heslop, South East England Councils (SEEC)
2.	Minutes of last meeting on 10 October 2018 (paper attached) Chair: Cllr Nicolas Heslop, SEEC
3.	Report of WSE Summit January 2019 and next steps (paper attached) Katharina Winbeck, London Councils
4.	Ongoing WSE priorities - Tackling Housing Barriers and WSE engagement with Sub-national Transport Bodies (paper attached) Kate O'Driscoll, East of England LGA & Nick Woolfenden, SEEC
5.	Future meeting dates
6.	AOB Chair: Cllr Nicolas Heslop, South East England Councils
7.	Meeting close

**WIDER SOUTH EAST POLITICAL STEERING GROUP
10 OCTOBER 2018 AT 14:00 – 16:00 AT CITY HALL, LONDON**

Meeting Notes for approval

Attendance

East

- Cllr David Finch, Essex County Council (Chairing today's meeting)
- Cllr James Jamieson, Central Bedfordshire Council
- Cllr Linda Haysey, East Hertfordshire District Council
- Cllr Roy Davis, Luton Borough Council
- Mayor Dave Hodgson, Bedford Borough Council
- Cecilia Tredget, Managing Director, East of England LGA
- Kate O'Driscoll, Policy and Programme Manager, East of England LGA
- Russell Williams, Chief Executive, Ipswich Borough Council
- Richard Hatter, Thurrock Council

South East

- Cllr Nicolas Heslop, Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council
- Cllr Carole Paternoster, Aylesbury Vale District Council
- Cllr John Furey, Surrey County Council
- Cllr Tony Page, Reading Borough Council
- Cllr Ann Newton, Wealden District Council (sub for Cllr Paul Bettison)
- Heather Bolton, Director, South East England Councils
- Nick Woolfenden, Head of Policy Coordination, South East England Councils

London

- Jules Pipe, Deputy Mayor for Planning, Regeneration and Skills
- Jennifer Peters, Head of London Plan and Growth Strategies, GLA
- Darren Richards, Growth Strategies and Urban Design Manager, GLA
- Jorn Peters, Senior Strategic Planner, GLA
- Jack Maizels, Transport for London (sub for Josephine Vos)
- Katharina Winbeck, Head of Transport, Environment and Infrastructure, London Councils

1. Welcome and apologies

- 1.1. Cllr David Finch, Leader of Essex County Council and Chairman of the East of England Local Government Association welcomed colleagues.

2. Notes of the last meeting – 21 March 2018

- 2.1. Notes of the previous meeting held on 21 March 2018 were approved as accurate.

3. Preparation for London Plan Examination

- 3.1. Jorn Peters (GLA) set out the changes in the Minor Suggested Changes (MSCs) reflecting the comments made by WSE partners, as detailed in the report and Annex 1. These included clarification that the Mayor of London's plan will meet the vast majority of London's needs in its boundary, and some high-level examples of possible collaboration.

- 3.2. It is expected that the London Plan Examination in Public will commence in mid-January and end in May 2019.
- 3.3. An overview of some of the draft Matters and Participants of particular relevance from the Wider South East perspective was given. Jorn indicated the areas where there could be potential scope for agreement including: Duty to Cooperate; Overall Spatial Development Strategy; the Wider South East and Beyond; Housing Supply and targets. The paper set out the GLA's emerging positions on these matters to help inform the WSE partners' positions.
- 3.4. Members from the East of England and South East provided feedback on the emerging GLA positions and discussion.
- 3.5. **Duty to Cooperate** - SE/E feedback included:
- Although the report refers to the GLA having engaged constructively with the local planning authorities across the WSE and had been transparent about that, some members were not aware of any conversations in their areas.
 - Discussions should not be solely about homes but also include industrial areas and the potential for employment opportunities and economic development and infrastructure.
 - There needs to be discussions with districts and borough authorities as well as counties.
- 3.6. Jorn referred to specific officer level meetings and the initial conversations that have happened and the status of those conversations as outlined in Annexe 2 to the paper. The GLA is very open to conversations with all interested councils including districts and boroughs. The collaboration is on a voluntary basis and is a two way process. Given the current national planning framework, the GLA cannot force local authorities to work together. The Mayor of London only has planning powers within London.
- 3.7. Deputy Mayor Jules Pipe noted that establishing the underlying relationships takes time. Jules explained that the Mayor does not simply want to place housing outside London. London is also concerned to not lose its employment. London will look for opportunities to work with WSE to grow key sectors within and outside London, rather than transfer them.
- 3.8. **Housing Shortfall** – SE / E feedback included:
- There should be a strategic assessment of the London Green Belt to contribute to London's potential growth requirements.
 - There was uncertainty whether the minor alterations mean the Mayor would be meeting all London's identified housing needs in its boundary or not, and what is 'plan B' if the Mayor's preferred strategy does not work.
 - What will happen if London fails on its delivery targets? How will this be monitored and managed, and what is the role for PSG in considering implications?
- 3.9. Deputy Mayor Jules Pipe responded that the Plan is as ambitious as it can be, to meet its housing needs, but it does have limits. Jules Pipe reaffirmed the Mayor of London's commitment to protecting the Green Belt and stated that only the comparatively small shortfall of up to 1, 065 pa homes for which additional capacity would need to be accommodated, inside or outside London. Jorn responded that monitoring is an important part of the Plan.
- 3.10. **Willing Partners** – SE/E feedback included:

- There is a still lack of clarity on what London can offer to potential willing partners for growth in terms of support for infrastructure and economic development that is of mutual benefit. It was asked whether there is a definition of what constitutes a willing partner.
- There was concern that if the Plan led to more commuters in to London, it would put pressure outside London on infrastructure and sustainable growth. There were also outstanding concerns from East about London Plan implications re excavation waste movements into the WSE.

3.11. The GLA acknowledged that there would be ongoing conversations with the waste technical advisory boards on the movement of excavation waste.

3.12. Cllr David Finch Chairman summarised that there are concerns remaining, but members welcome the GLA's ongoing engagement. There is a willingness for continued collaboration on areas of mutual interest.

4. WSE strategic infrastructure - engaging with Sub-national Transport Bodies

4.1. Cllr Mayor Dave Hodgson (Chair of England's Economic Heartland Strategic Transport Forum), Cllr Tony Page (Vice Chair of TfSE) and Cllr Linda Haysey, on behalf of Transport East, gave a progress update. The WSE PSG has previously discussed benefits of engagement between the WSE partnership and STBs engage to help progress strategic infrastructure investment priorities for the WSE. This would be light touch and build on existing shared membership. The three STBs are in the process of developing overarching Transport Strategies for their areas and are at varying stages in development, as set out in the briefing paper produced by STB officers for today's meeting.

4.2. Members discussed that it was in everyone's interest for the STBs to engage effectively with the WSE partnership. It was noted that individual local authorities have differing levels of understanding of the roles of the STBs, and there is a need to consider the practical ways that the WSE PSG can help promote and support the STBs' relevant priorities as they emerge.

4.3. **ACTION: Following suggestion from STB representatives, it was agreed that the politicians of the three STBs would have a meeting to consider how they can best engage with, feed into and be represented at the WSE PSG.**

5. Tackling Housing Barriers – Land Value Capture

5.1. Nick Woolfenden, explained since the last PSG meeting, Kit Malthouse had been appointed as the latest housing minister (replacing Dominic Raab), and the final NPPF was published. Members were asked to consider the emerging WSE package of proposals to help infrastructure funding through Land Value Capture as outline in the paper.

5.2. The following was discussed:

- There does not appear to be a single 'silver bullet' solution to put forward but rather a package that could be taken to government.
- Analysis by the Mayor of London would help contribute to the work.
- In defining land value, it is important to consider the premium required by owners/developers.
- The outcome of the Letwin Review is still unknown.
- It would be useful to raise the issues with the Treasury also.
- It would be helpful to explore if the forthcoming WSE Summit had any further input on the matter.

5.3. **ACTION: It was agreed that following the Summit the WSE PSG write to Kit Malthouse for a meeting to discuss a package of proposals to help infrastructure funding through Land Value Capture. POST MEETING NOTE: Summit agreed there was an urgent priority to write to the Minister about PDR. The land value uplift capture letter will follow in spring.**

6. Common Understand of Evidence – Smarter/Digital Development Data

6.1. Jules presented this item outlining the GLA project to automate the flow of development data, including consents, commencements and completions, from Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) within London to the GLA. Molly Strauss, from the GLA Infrastructure Team provided further detail. It was noted that this project currently focused within London but GLA invites interest from councils outside boundaries to share the system free of charge. It will be a live data hub that operates at real time.

6.2. The relevance and benefits for the WSE were set out in the report including:

- A consistent and automated approach to development data could potentially facilitate cross-border development planning and support the Duty to Cooperate.
- In the spirit of WSE collaboration, it could potentially also help to provide accurate technical evidence to underpin joint strategic lobbying. In seeking to tackle barriers to housing delivery for example, WSE partners have been struggling to convince a previous Minister of the real scale of the development pipeline across the WSE due to insufficient/inconsistent data.

6.3. **ACTION: WSE officers to explore potential benefits and interest in involvement outside London. SEEC and EELGA would include this as an item in their next Newsletters.**

6.4. **ACTION: It was agreed to consider this project as a potential item at the WSE Summit.**

7. Preparing for the Wider South East Summit – 11 January 2019

7.1. Members consider the Summit's focus, topics and format, to be held on 11 January 2019, 1-4pm in London's Living Room at City Hall London. It was noted that the London Plan EiP will be starting very soon after the Summit, and therefore not appropriate for detailed discussion on London Plan issues at this Summit.

7.2. Members discussed and agreed that:

- The Mayor's presence for part of the Summit is important, in addition to Jules Pipe.
- The topics suggested (ie. WSE sustainable/good growth; and future WSE collaborative priorities/actions) were the right ones.
- It would be useful to also have contributions from the STBs and how strategic infrastructure can support housing growth.
- The format of interactive roundtable discussions works well.

7.3. **ACTION: WSE officers to send out hold the date to Summit invitees soon after the PSG.**

8. Next Steps

8.1. Cllr David Finch summarised the key actions and closed the meeting.

Next meeting: 8 March 2019, City Hall London.

Recommendation

- Members to note the information or comment and agree a final version to be made public.

1. Summit

- 1.1 The Summit was held in the Living Room at City Hall on 11 January 2019. There were short presentations and panel discussions from representatives across the three regions, including a keynote address by the Mayor of London Sadiq Khan.
- 1.2 The theme of the Summit was ‘Addressing Growth Challenges Across the Wider South East’ and attracted over 100 senior Councillors, LEPs and officers from across the WSE.
- 1.3 It was the first Summit since the draft London Plan was submitted for Examination in Public (EiP), starting the following week (15 January). Summit discussion therefore focused on possible joint actions building on previous member discussions and the approach set out in the emerging London Plan. The outcomes of the EiP and next steps on the London Plan will also remain a key issue for the WSE political partnership, to understand the implications for joint working.
- 1.4 It was evident from the contributions to the plenary sessions and the table discussions that there is an appetite to build on the WSE work to date and develop more substantive collaboration between the councils and other organisations involved.

2. Key Themes Emerging from the Discussion

- 2.1 Four principal strands of activity were referred to during the discussion:

Consolidating the collaboration

- 2.2 Several contributors referred to the potential for consolidating and deepening the collaboration between the organisations involved in the WSE work. The presence of key members from the new Sub-National Transport Bodies (Transport for the South East, England’s Economic Heartland and Transport East) was valued. Reference was also made to strengthening the collective voice of local government following discussions between the chairs of the East of England LGA and South East England Councils. One contributor suggested whether the WSE Political Steering Group should meet more often to help speed progress.

One voice

- 2.3 Contributors from the platform and the floor spoke about the value of more joint cross-party/cross-tier initiatives to influence government. This was also raised in several of the table discussions. Examples of where this would be useful include:
 - Making the infrastructure investment case;
 - Articulating the benefits of economic growth in the WSE for the national economy;

- Pursuing policy improvements on, for example, action to accelerate residential development; or influencing Government policy where it is having unintended negative consequences eg. permitted development rights which are reducing funding for infrastructure/affordable housing and allowing unplanned development.

Pooling resources

- 2.4 Points were also made about scope for joint work across the WSE including, for example, pooling or jointly commissioning research. Two examples included: research on the future of town and city centres, and the GLA's Smart Digital Development Data project which makes gathering / analysing / disseminating development data more effective.

Specific priorities and opportunities for collaboration

- 2.5 Several contributors referred to the value of exploring collaboration on specific growth opportunities - reference was made to the Thames Estuary, the Oxford-Milton Keynes-Cambridge Arc, the London-Stansed-Cambridge Corridor and emerging Garden Communities. One contributor suggested that comprehensive mapping of the possible opportunities could be a way of building momentum. Working together could also focus on strategic cross boundary issues such as commuting, housing, homelessness, skills, economic growth, and the 'willing partners' approach set out in the draft London Plan.
- 2.6 **The over-riding challenge and opportunity is to agree a resource-light way of building momentum following the Summit and making progress on these four themes.**
- 2.7 Annex A and B provide a more detailed summary of the two round table discussions held at the Summit – "Specific priorities and opportunities for collaboration on 'good growth'" and "Shaping WSE priorities for 2019".

ITEM 3 ANNEX A: SPECIFIC PRIORITIES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR COLLABORATION ON 'GOOD GROWTH' - SUMMARY OF TABLE DISCUSSION FEEDBACK

Employment

- Facilitate moving/promoting employment opportunities outside London to provide jobs locally and reduce travel and take pressure off London.
- Facilitate bilateral discussion on these opportunities.
- Build on existing employment sector clusters eg. film/media, and corridors eg. London-Stansted-Cambridge and London-Reading.
- Consider Garden Communities in Essex and Herts for long term locations.

Pooling Resources

- Build and share professional skills where there is a deficit/lack of understanding eg. development viability.
- Work with Sub National Transport Bodies to ensure we are using the same evidence base and do not duplicate any work.
- Perhaps undertake some joint research, for example the impact of technology on commuting patterns or the current experiences of the local high street.
- Represent the opportunities for growth across the WSE in a geographical format.

Share experiences and innovation

- Learn from innovation in other areas in the UK and internationally (Milton Keynes was cited as an example, smart ticketing, smart motorways, setting up of development companies).
- Highlight examples of collaboration that has worked well – there should be many in the WSE.

One Voice

- Agree a long-term vision that is cross-party on a number of issues, such as housing, strategic transport, green belt, economic development
- Undertake more prioritising with regards to what the WSE PSG focuses on. Perhaps have one priority for the WSE and concentrate fully on that?
- Ensure existing assets are fully utilised before moving on to build new assets (improved understanding of existing housing stock compared against need was an example here).
- Continue and improve on the lobbying efforts and ensure all opportunities are utilised (e.g. PDR consultation).
- Agree and lobby on strategic infrastructure to present a strong voice to central government. This needs a generic acceptance that the region has seen a significant transport investment shortfall over decades, which requires filling before residents in some areas would accept further growth.

Improved Collaboration

- Work more collaboratively across administrative boundaries, e.g. pooling housing targets and infrastructure projects across borders, jointly developing local strategic plans with neighbouring authorities. This may help with funding and gaining more concessions from central government.
- Engage more proactively with LEPs and key businesses, including SMEs and developers to strengthen the case to government.
- Engage further with less obvious partners, such as universities and private sector firms to stimulate debate and innovation.
- More detail on how to engage with the Mayor and GLA on the 'willing partner' approach (Wycombe has expressed an interest in this).
- Some areas have concerns about an outmigration of homeless people from London.

ITEM 3 ANNEX B: SHAPING WSE PRIORITIES FOR 2019 - SUMMARY OF TABLE DISCUSSION FEEDBACK

Employment

- Areas of collaboration on economy and jobs between London and the rest of the WSE should be explored to ensure employment hubs grow outside London as well

Pooling Resources

- Mapping of the willing partners and their specific asks and offers
- Development and planning resources and skills across WSE, including new ways of working

Sharing experience and innovation

- How to deliver more affordable housing and land value capture or the use of pension funds
- Ensure places are built to high quality standards, cannot leave this purely to the market

One Voice

- Articulate the strategic infrastructure requirements for the WSE, including links with other English regions. Need to co-ordinate and align priorities with STBs.
- Establish a statement of intent.

Improved Collaboration

- Develop a common approach and standards for housing and transport data to enable improved coordination and collection of data across the WSE
- Explore through ticketing across the WSE and across different transport modes.
- Meet more often as the WSE PSG to
 - Monitor delivery of relevant aspects of the London Plan and the implications if WSE fails to meet housing needs
 - Deliver a programme of work on engagement with 'willing partners' and expectations

Recommendations

- Members to note the information for comment.

1. Tackling Housing Barriers

Permitted Development Rights

- 1.1 At the Wider South East Summit held on 11 January 2019, there was an appetite from members to strengthen the collective voice of the WSE, through working together on more joint cross-party/ cross tier initiatives to influence government on policy. Following concerns from a number of members on the recent government proposals to further extend the Permitted Development Rights (PDR) regime, the WSE PSG has drafted a letter to Kit Malthouse MP, Minister of State for Housing, to set out its significant shared concerns.
- 1.2 These concerns relate to the potential unintended consequences of:
- Encouraging residential development that is below acceptable space and design standards.
 - Further PDR sites coming forward without contributing to addressing the need for genuinely affordable housing, given PDR exemptions from these contributions.
 - Undermining councils' ability to ensure a suitable mix of uses that help to ensure vibrant town centres.
 - Worsening the Wider South East's existing infrastructure deficit through lack of financial contributions from PDR sites.
 - Undermining councils' role in supporting and developing key sectors of the local economy. Whilst we are committed to a positive plan-led approach, PDR can bypass this and potentially result in loss of employment spaces and sites.
- 1.3 The WSE PSG is asking for a meeting with the Minister to explore this, and more broadly, how it can work with government on initiatives to increase housing delivery further.

Land value uplift capture for infrastructure and related issues

- 1.4 Members previously agreed to jointly write to Ministers highlighting options for how land value uplift capture might be able to help fund infrastructure in the Wider South East, to support sustainable communities and economies. It was also agreed the issue should be considered as part of January's Summit discussions, alongside other housing delivery challenges.
- 1.5 Reflecting Summit feedback, it was felt the most immediate priority was to write to Government on Permitted Development Rights (see above), given it is currently considering consultation responses on that issue. Officers will now continue work to draft a letter to Government on options for land value uplift capture. Member views are also invited on whether it is timely to review other issues related to tackling WSE housing delivery barriers,

including exploring the benefits and ways to identify detailed information on the scale of unimplemented permissions.

2. WSE engagement with Sub-national Transport Bodies

- 2.1 Working collectively to influence government on investment in strategic infrastructure has been a key shared priority for the WSE PSG. Members have previously discussed the potential for engagement between the WSE PSG and the emerging Sub-national Transport Bodies (STBs) covering the WSE geography: England's Economic Heartland; Transport East; and Transport for the South East.
- 2.2 At the WSE PSG on 10 October 2018, Cllr Mayor Dave Hodgson, Chair of England's Economic Heartland's Strategic Transport Forum and Cllr Tony Page, Vice Chair of Transport for South East and Cllr Linda Haysey on behalf of Transport East, gave a progress update on the three STBs as set out in the briefing paper circulated to members.
- 2.3 It was noted that the STBs are in the process of developing overarching strategies for their areas and are at varying stages in development. Members discussed that informal collaboration is already taking place and it was in everyone's interest for the STBs to engage with the WSE partnership, as well as to consider the practical ways that the WSE PSG can help promote and support the STBs' relevant priorities as they emerge.
- 2.4 Following the suggestion from STB representatives, it was agreed that the politicians of the three STBs would have a meeting to consider how they can best engage with, feed into and be represented at the WSE PSG. It was also agreed that the work of the STBs is included as a topic at the WSE Summit on 11 January 1-4pm at City Hall.
- 2.5 For today's meeting PSG Members representing an STB have been asked to each provide a brief 5 minute update on current priorities and any developments on how the STBs can best engage with the WSE PSG.

AOB - handed out at the meeting

DRAFT – GLA Planning Wider South East meetings between Summer 2018 to March 2019

4 Jul	Aylesbury Vale – collaboration opportunities – City Hall
9 Jul	Essex County Council (Cllr Gagan Mohindra) meeting Deputy Mayor for Planning – housing and planning issues – City Hall
13 Jul	Planning Officer Society - Joint London, South East meeting - Ebbsfleet
16 Jul	South Essex Joint Strategic Plan & Strategic Growth Location Study – City Hall
22 Aug	Wider South East Secretariat – City Hall
13 Sept	Wider South East Officer Working Group – London
24 Sept	Kent County Council – introductory meeting – City Hall
27 Sept	Wider South East Waste TAB Chairs – London
10 Oct	Wider South East Political Steering Group – London
16 Oct	London Waste Planning Forum
1 Nov	Sub-national Transport Bodies (TfSE and EEH)– collaboration opportunities – City Hall
16 Nov	Thames Gateway Strategic Group – agreeing new Governance arrangements – City Hall
30 Nov	Planning Officer Society – Joint Spatial Plans and South East Networks meeting – London
8 Jan	London Waste Planning Forum
11 Jan	Wider South East Summit – Collaboration on Growth across WSE - City Hall
15 Jan	East of England Waste TAB
22 Jan	South East Waste PAG
28 Jan	Epsom & Ewell – Duty to Cooperate - City Hall
5 Feb	Basildon – Duty to Cooperate – City Hall
7 Feb	Sub-national Transport Bodies (TfSE and EEH Chairs meeting Deputy Mayors for Planning and Transport)– City Hall
8 Mar	Wider South East Political Steering Group – City Hall

Further meetings currently being considered

- Buckinghamshire County Council – collaboration opportunities
- Oxfordshire County Council – collaboration opportunities
- Combined Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Authority – their strategic approach
- Oxford-MK-Cambridge Arc – their strategic approach
- South Essex Joint Strategic Plan – follow up
- Basingstoke – vision for growth follow up
- Central Bedfordshire –DtC meeting