

SOUTH EAST ENGLAND DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

BOARD MEETING ON 26 MARCH 2009

ITEM 13

AGENCY REPORT

Recommendation

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

GLOBAL COMPETITIVENESS

Global Markets programme

Inward Investment Activity

1. SEEDA has secured 17 inward investment successes which will create 170 new and 3 safeguarded jobs over the upcoming three years. These figures are consistent with the same period in 2008 and present a positive outlook for foreign direct investments (FDI) despite the current economic challenges.

Business Development events attended:

Aero India, Bangalore

2. SEEDA attended Aero India, Asia's largest Aerospace show and convention. Supporting UK Trade & Investment and Farnborough Aerospace Consortium, Aero India provided an excellent opportunity to meet potential investors and promote the sector strengths of the South East.

FICCI Frames, Mumbai

3. SEEDA attended FICCI FRAMES, Asia's largest convention for the creative industry sector. The event was attended by delegates from India and other key international markets showcasing the latest technology, products and services, with a particular focus on broadcasting, digital entertainment, animation, production and gaming. SEEDA was able to meet with many potential investors and follow up with specific information and assistance.

Greater South East Presentation, Melbourne

4. SEEDA, along with UKTI Melbourne, Think London and East of England International participated in three seminars in Melbourne, promoting the Greater South East. SEEDA was able to highlight the South East's sectoral strengths for Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), Nanotechnology, Biotechnology and Environmental Technology. The seminar was well-attended and attracted over 60 delegates.

UKTI Annual Conference, Germany

5. SEEDA attended the UKTI annual conference in Germany which was held in Dusseldorf in January 2009. The conference brought together the UKTI Germany team, representatives from UKTI HQ, partner agencies and the UK

Embassy in Germany. The conference included sessions on the economic crisis and on energy issues, with plenary and break-out sessions covering trade and inward investment related topics. The conference presented SEEDA with an excellent opportunity to foster a more collaborative working relationship with UKTI.

Energy from Biomass and Waste Event, Germany

6. SEEDA Germany attended an "energy from biomass and waste" event in Dusseldorf, Germany. The event highlighted current market opportunities in this sector in the UK, providing a good platform to liaise with UKTI Germany and to develop further the relationship with existing contacts in this industry sector.

Pinewood/Shepperton Studios

7. SEEDA are discussing a proposed softlandings venture for the creative industry at Pinewood Studios. Through a number of SEEDA supported programmes, a pipeline of major studio films has been secured for the South East, adding a significant amount of private sector leverage for the region.

UKTI Los Angeles (LA) visit, South East

8. SEEDA met with UKTI LA, to highlight the South East's strong proposition in the biotechnology and ICT clusters. SEEDA also organised meetings with SEHTA and Basingstoke-based Master Control, an inward investment success that resulted from a joint UKTI/SEEDA collaboration.

Swedish delegation visit – 6 February

9. A senior delegation representing Stockholm, a new partner region in POWER, visited South East England on 6 February 09. The delegation was led by Thomas Friis Konst, Head of Mission for the Brussels Office of the Stockholm region. The discussion between the regions focused on how to join forces in an economic downturn and honed in on the best ways of encouraging a more entrepreneurial society.

Skills Audit Report for the South East, Oxford Intelligence

10. SEEDA hosted a presentation at Guildford HQ on 13 February, reporting the findings of the Skills Audit Report commissioned from Oxford Intelligence. The report benchmarked the South East's skills availability within Engineering, Lifesciences, Environmental Technologies, Financial Services, Food Science and Nanotechnology. The South East was found to have strong skill sets overall, and was ranked in among the top 3 UK regions for skills in each of these sectors. The major opportunity identified by the report was the large latent talent pools that exist within the region.

Research and Development Programme

National Aerospace Technology Strategy

ASTRAEA

11. 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 (£2m) is supporting a high level of Research & Development (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.

12. ASTRAEA has now achieved a number of key technology aims and objectives including a feasible communications systems for unmanned air systems and software for adaptive route management.
13. There has also been two very successful trials; the first involving autonomous pre-take off ground manoeuvring by the BAES Herti UAV using systems developed under ASTRAEA, the second resulting in what is believed to be the first unmanned air system fully autonomous formation flight using vision based guidance systems.

HealthMap

14. SEEDA funding (£3m over three years) is contributing to the HealthMap, an R&D programme to develop Health Management and Prognostic methods for the aerospace industry. A number of technical challenges have been successfully resolved by QinetiQ and their SME partners this last quarter notably a problem in relation with a humidity coil in one of the proposed sensor solutions being developed.

Innovation and Creativity Programme

Sector Consortia

15. The Chairman, Chief Executive and Alex Pratt hosted a lunch with the Chairs and Chief Executives of the seven Sector Consortia enabling a discussion on how the economic downturn was affecting each of the sectors, the role the Sector Consortia are playing in supporting their business members and their early thinking on how, informed by the Global Opportunities research that has just been completed, they will seek to exploit global opportunities for their sectors.

South East Business Innovation and Growth

16. The first 4 Innovation and Growth Teams are on track for launch in April. These zones cover the areas below:
 - West Surrey and North East Hampshire
 - Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes
 - Berkshire and Basingstoke
 - South and Mid Hampshire and the Isle of WightApplications for grant funding were received for phase 2 which cover Oxfordshire, Kent and Medway, East Surrey and West Sussex, East Sussex and Brighton & Hove

Broadband and ICT

17. Lord Carter's interim "Digital Britain" report was published on 29 January 2009. Significant items contained in it include a proposal for a Universal Service Commitment (USC) for broadband and an intention to ensure appropriate electromagnetic spectrum is available to ensure widespread availability of mobile broadband services. SEEDA is working with the other RDAs to produce a collective response to the report which despite its current interim status has

generated a great deal of interest both nationally and across the south east. Since publication SEEDA has noted a very significant increase in contacts from sub regional organisations regarding future broadband deployment.

SMART GROWTH

Enterprise Programme

Business Link

18. Since the launch of the free Health Check service as part of the response to the recession Business Link has undertaken over 6,000 Health Checks with businesses across the South East. The vast majority of Health Checks are focusing on customers and markets and finance issues. Overall, traffic to Business Link has increased since the beginning of the economic downturn - telephone calls into BL are up by 50% on this time last year. At the end of Quarter 3 (December 08), Business Link reported engaging with more than 142,000 businesses. The recent independent customer satisfaction survey indicates that 93% of all customers are satisfied with their interaction with BL.

National Business Link

19. Following the Prime Minister's announcement in January SEEDA has been working on behalf of RDAs with the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) and the Department for Business, Enterprise & Regulatory Reform (BERR) on developing a DWP funded self employment option for unemployed claimants of over 6 months to access Business Link support. This is due to be launched on the 6 April. SEEDA has handed over the lead role responsibility for National Business Link to EMDA who will finalise the negotiations with DWP.

Business Link - Social Enterprise Capacity Building

20. SEEDA and Business Link in the South East are working together to support a programme of business support for social enterprises in the region. A Voucher Scheme has been launched which will be managed by Business Link, in conjunction with the SE2 partnership. The scheme aims to remove the barriers which may be stopping social enterprises from obtaining much needed specialist advice. The Voucher Scheme provides business support funding between £500 and £2,500 to enable social enterprises to procure the services of independent business support providers.

Train to Gain

21. Train to Gain skills brokerage remains on track to meet its targets by the end of the year. There was a slight pick up after Christmas with increases in employer engagements (7500 engagements April 08 - January 09) and in learner starts at Level 2 (2096 starts in January 2009). Work is ongoing in developing links with the newly formed National Apprenticeship Service, providing expertise to the brokerage on apprenticeships. In response to the economic downturn, the

skills brokerage service is working more closely with Job Centre Plus to provide support for employers who may have to make redundancies and to support those who are looking to recruit staff.

Redundancy Support – Continuous Employment Support Service

22. SEEDA has helped lead work with the other key agencies, Learning and Skills Council (LSC) and Job Centre Plus (JCP), to pull together a single regional Recovery Plan, which has been submitted to the Regional Economic Council. One of SEEDA's distinctive contributions is the Continuous Employment Support Service (CESS). Via a number of brokers, the CESS offers free, tailored, in-house support to the individuals affected in companies planning to downsize, before they are made redundant. SEEDA's knowledge of companies who are increasing staff numbers means that we are able to broker job matching.
23. In the light of the downturn, SEEDA is increasing the number of brokers across the region. We have already increased from two to three since the start of this calendar year, and plan to have two further brokers in place in April. These brokers bring deep experience in knowing what all the agencies have to offer to individuals facing redundancy and retraining.
24. The CESS brokers work closely with companies identified by our Investor Development Managers as potentially requiring help. They have been first on the scene in many companies over the past two months, including Ford at Southampton.

Women's Enterprise Regional Activity

25. SEEDA's Women's Enterprise programme of regional events called 'What's Stopping You?' continued their highly successful run in February 2009. SEEDA, working with the regional Business Link Providers, are delivering these events which 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 addition this year fledgling or struggling businesses can also attend, to gain advice on sustaining their business and signposting into mainstream business support.

International Women's Day Event

26. A national Women's Enterprise Task Force event was held on 9 March in partnership with Canada House to mark International Women's Day. Organised by SEEDA, this event was held by the Women's Enterprise Task Force in partnership with the Department for Business, Enterprise and Regulatory Reform and the East Midlands Development Agency, who lead on Women's Enterprise on behalf of the Regional Development Agency network. Speakers and guests included senior representatives from the UK Government, the US and the Canada, along with women business owners, policy makers and the media. It followed a seminar at No 11 Downing Street hosted by Harriet Harman and attended by several senior Ministers and Pam Alexander to identify the issues affecting women in recession ahead of the G20 Summit.

Tourism

CompeteFor

27. CompeteFor is the pre-qualification questionnaire system supported by the business network and supplier support to release contracts from the tier contractors. The CompeteFor programme is a partnership with all the RDAs, DAs, Olympic Delivery Authority and The London Organising Committee of the Olympic Games (LOCOG).

- To-date, there are almost 57,000 business registered on the system. The South East is still the most active outside of London with 10,073 registered.
- 2,038 opportunities have been posted on the system to-date worth an estimated £108m. There are a further 1,091 opportunities in the pipeline.
- A total of 217 awards have been made to-date, including 121 awards (representing 56%) to CompeteFor suppliers. The South East has won 22 contracts through CompeteFor worth at least £13m. Currently 147 companies in the South East are short listed to win contracts. In total companies in the South East have won over 140 '2012' contracts.

Tourism – Business Recovery Campaign

28. The campaign to aid business recovery in the sector which SEEDA invested £200k, (the balance of £300k being match funded by partners) has been launched. The campaign has led with multipage inserts in the Mail on Sunday, Saturday and Sunday Telegraph. This is supported by a radio campaign and has been carried on major web sites including Yahoo Travel. Response has been very positive so far with over 5000 web enquiries for accommodation, 2000 downloads for vouchers and a competition attached to the Daily telegraph attracted 1200 entries within the first few days.

Launch of POWER

29. POWER is a €5.8m inter-regional programme aimed at **driving** Low Carbon Economies partly funded through INTERREG IVC in seven European regions: Andalusia (Spain), Emilia-Romagna (Italy), Malopolska (Poland), Noord-Brabant (The Netherlands), South East England (England), Stockholm (Sweden), and Tallinn (Estonia).
30. SEEDA has launched the POWER inter-regional Programme in Noord-Brabant on 11 & 12 March attended by 80 delegates from the 7 participating regions. The UK delegation was lead by Alex Pratt, Board Member. POWER will fund up to 12 international projects that can drive a Low Carbon Economy, building a successful economy for the future with 9 specifications now open for South East bidders covering Energy Efficiency, Renewable energy, Eco-Innovation and Environmental Technologies, Sustainable transport and Behaviour change.

Signature of Memorandum of Understanding between Noord-Brabant & SEEDA

31. A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed by Alex Pratt between Province Noord-Brabant and SEEDA. SEEDA and Noord-Brabant have been co-operating with each other for some years under the GROW framework (POWER predecessor) and a number of other EC co-operations run by local stakeholders on the innovation and sustainable agendas. The MOU offers a

strategic framework beyond EC funding for future co-operation with regional and local stakeholders and covers:

- Energy & Low Carbon Economies
- Rural Affairs
- Innovation & Entrepreneurship.

SUSTAINABLE PROSPERITY

Low Carbon Programme

32. Last year SEEDA formed the Low Carbon Regional Leadership Group for the South East, to encourage other key public sector bodies to match SEEDA's objective of a 30% carbon reduction by 2011. The Group was formally launched in January at the Regional Economic Strategy Partners' Conference.
33. As part of a programme to move to major, community-wide retrofit work, SEEDA has brokered meetings between eaga (the UK's leading provider of residential energy efficiency solutions) and both Eastleigh and Milton Keynes Councils. The prospects look good for kicking off major community retrofit programmes in both council areas. The Eastleigh experience may provide a base from which to work across the Partnership for Urban South Hampshire (PUSH) area.

Resource Efficiency Programme

The Pathway to Zero Waste Programme

34. The Pathway to Zero Waste Programme (PTZW) was formally launched in Reading on 3 March by SEEDA, the Environment Agency and the Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP). The first target for the programme is to halve the amount of construction waste going to landfill by 2011. Other material streams being targeted for action subsequently are food and wood. The launch was attended by over 100 chief executives and senior decision-makers from the region's local authorities, construction, waste management, logistics, transport companies, food and drink producers, retailers, financial institutions and waste recycling technology providers.
35. Via a video message at the launch the Secretary of State for the Environment, Food, Farming and Rural Affairs, Hilary Benn MP, praised the aim of the programme: creating a culture change so industry thinks of waste as a resource. The industry speaker, Mark Trant of Willmott Dixon gave examples of the economic benefits of this approach.

Growing the Environmental Sector

36. SEEDA has set up a Programme Board to maximise the business opportunities from work across SEEDA and by Envirobusiness, our sector consortium. In March a number of projects are being let in support of the environmental transformational action in the Regional Economic Strategy (RES). One key project is to update research on the global business opportunities, and the

strengths of the sector in the region, and this will be used to build up the value chain as well as maximise on global sales opportunities.

European Social Fund (ESF) and European Regional Development Fund (ERDF)

37. During the last two months the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) Competitiveness programme has negotiated the funding agreements for the first round of projects to receive support. Subject to sign-off, eight projects are being supported totalling approximately £3.4m (European and SEEDA Single Pot funding). These projects will support businesses in developing products and services which help take forward sustainable production and consumption. The second application round is due to be launched in March and will be aimed at supporting the Pathway to Zero Waste programme. The European Commission has said it may use the South East programme as a case study for the impact which can be made on this agenda with limited funding.

Natural and Rural Resources Programme

Rural Business Development

Sector Champions

38. In the light of the economic downturn SEEDA sponsored sector champions - who help grow land-based industries through spreading good practice - have now started to look at future trends for their industry, to develop ideas on how to grow out of the recession. The first of a series of 'think-tank' workshops involving industry leaders focused on the top fruit industry in early March.

Economically Thriving Rural Towns

39. The region-wide South East Rural Towns Partnership - set up to develop the potential of small rural towns - has recently launched an improved web site. The website <http://www.setowns.org.uk/> includes information and links to many of the projects in the programme, and will be used to increase the impact of the programme by spreading best practice.

Sustainable Communities Programme

Economic impact of creative, cultural and third sectors

40. In February SEEDA convened a series of meetings with partners to take stock of the Regional Economic Strategy (RES) Target 14 relating to sustainable communities and sustainable prosperity. The results were presented to the RES Leadership Group in February who agreed that further work needs to be done to achieve even greater focus on developing creative and innovative collaborations across the Corporate, Creative, Cultural and Third sectors. This offers great potential to develop new business opportunities and innovation to help move out of the recession.

The South East Creative Economy Partnership

41. Towards the end of 2008 a new South East Creative Economy Partnership was set up by SEEDA, bringing together a wide range of partners to focus on achieving economic benefit from the Creative Britain initiative (the Department for Culture Media and Sport Creative Economy Programme published in 2008).
42. To maximise the economic potential of cultural and creative industries, SEEDA has commissioned the development of a powerful knowledge management system to connect information across sectors and organisations so as to enable open innovation. A prototype will be completed by April. The system will enable cultural and creative industries, businesses and public organisations to bring together information to make informed investment and business decisions; identify new markets and where traditional markets need to adapt to demographic and economic change; and enable businesses and organisations to bid more successfully for funding and develop more informed business models and strategies.
43. Other pieces of work commissioned by the Partnership are: preventing loss of talent during the recession; identifying opportunities for revenue-based culturally-led regeneration in areas where capital investment is stalling economic regeneration plans; identifying the market demand for new products and services stimulated by the four year Cultural Olympiad.

Culturally Led Regeneration

44. In January DCMS announced that Hastings would receive a major, £2M Sea Change grant. SEEDA helped the development of the bid, to maximise the economic benefit, and has agreed to provide match funding of £650k. Creating a piazza, performance space and cultural community centre will enhance the setting for the Jerwood Gallery to be built on the seafront area of the Old Town. Economic outcomes from this investment will include improvement of 1.1ha of brownfield land, an additional 133,500 visitors, 104 new jobs, £10.8m extra revenue and extra GVA of £2.9m per annum. The catalytic impact will include a £2.5m increase in value of retail premises in the area surrounding the Stade, plus £232k pa in increased tax receipts from nearby businesses.

The Corporate Cabinet

45. The Corporate Cabinet has been focused on three streams of activity: financial inclusion; digital inclusion and innovation; Making the Most of 2012. Its approach is to start small in order to innovate and build trust across organisations that have not worked collaboratively together before. Projects are selected because they have the potential to be scaled up quickly across the South East, particularly through digital technology.
46. The financial inclusion theme is the most advanced. Legal & General and EDF Energy are now working together to support the development of the two credit unions in West and East Sussex. This includes offering gift in kind business analysis, support, and process reviews, as well as promoting Credit Unions through their own payrolls. Currently the capacity of the credit unions in the region is insufficient to meet the challenges of the economic downturn. The business case for corporate involvement is that the sooner people can get back

in to positive finance; the better it is for businesses dependent on domestic customers and the wider region.

47. The Corporate Cabinet's digital inclusion and innovation group, chaired by Intel, is looking to expand on this initiative. Members include BT, Microsoft, Toshiba, TATA, Samsung, Huawei, Gov 3, UK Online Centres, Ability net, Citizen's Online, NCVO IT Hubs, Age Concern, DC10 Plus. The group will look at providing gift in kind and cash support to develop ICT capacity for frontline and backroom services of credit unions across the South East and expansion of the model into other parts of the region.

Making the Most of 2012

48. As the strategic lead for the 2012 Legacy in the South East; SEEDA co-ordinated the visit to the region by Lord Sebastian Coe, Chair of the London Organising Committee for the Olympic and Paralympic Games (LOCOG) in February. This was a very successful event, starting with the launch of the Buckinghamshire Offer for the 2012 Games and showcasing the innovative Accentuate programme. Accentuate will utilise the inspiration of the Paralympic Games, with their origin at Stoke Mandeville, to celebrate excellence in all aspects of life for people with a disability. SEEDA, as the main economic partner, has contributed funding that will result in 202 new jobs and £11.5m GVA. This will be generated by improving opportunities for disabled people across the cultural, creative and visitor economies. Lord Coe was extremely impressed with Accentuate's innovative approach to creating an economic, social and sporting legacy for the region.

ENABLING INFRASTRUCTURE AND DEVELOPMENT

Strategic Development Fund Programme

Cowes Outer Harbour

49. All outstanding issues associated with the proposed development have now been resolved and it is intended that a planning application and the marine consents will be submitted to the Isle of Wight Council by early March 2009.

Woolston

50. Commercial negotiations with both Crest Nicholson Regeneration (CNR) and Palmer Johnson continue to progress. The remediation of the land on which the marine quarter will be sited is completed. It is anticipated that the remediation of the area designated for residential development will be completed by mid 2009.

Daedalus

51. The Visionary Framework document, which sets out SEEDA's vision for future development at Daedalus, is in the process of being finalised following the submission of comments from key stakeholders including the Local Authorities and local residents. It is envisaged that the process by which the Local

Authorities formally support the document will be complete by the end of March 2009. The Project Team is currently working with the local planning officers to determine what detail is required to progress the next stage of the project planning strategy.

East Cowes

52. SEEDA continue to progress negotiations associated with developments in the town centre site – including Waitrose and the medical centre. Once these have been completed, relevant planning applications will be submitted to the Isle of Wight Council (IoWC). Clancy Docwra have been appointed as the contractors to undertake the Phase 1 infrastructure works. These have now commenced and it is anticipated these will be completed by the end of July 2009.

The New Marlowe Theatre and Beaney Centre, Canterbury

53. Work will start on site in March 2009 for the New Marlowe Theatre and Beaney Centre redevelopment in Canterbury, and is due to be completed by the end of 2010. SEEDA has contributed £2.9m towards developing a new library, theatre and gallery.
54. The work will involve redevelopment of the popular New Marlowe Theatre and the complete refurbishment and extension of the central library, museum and gallery called the Beaney Centre.
55. The redevelopment of the New Marlowe Theatre will include a new two tier auditorium and the creation of a second space, with the main aim being to develop its own productions.
56. The Beaney will be refurbished and extended. The extension will almost double the existing space, creating a much more accessible and user friendly public space, including a café and interactive exhibition space.

Infrastructure Programme

A High Speed Future for Europe's Regions: HST Projects

57. The two European Union funded High Speed Train projects, HST Integration and HSTconnect concluded at the end of December 2008 with a summary booklet produced to highlight the successes of the two projects.
58. The projects, led by SEEDA, brought together 27 partners from the UK, France, Belgium, the Netherlands and Germany. They focussed on enhancing the high-speed train network through North West Europe, through targeted infrastructure investment, the upgrading of stations to improve their environment and accessibility and the creation of multi-modal transport hubs linked to the high-speed network.
59. The projects had a total value of €50m, of which €23m of the funding came from the European Regional Development Fund, through the INTERREG IIIB programme. The programmes have also helped to leverage significant further public and private sector investment ensuring that the development of the HST network adds value in terms of social and economic regeneration and

sustainability. Research undertaken by the HST projects to measure the impact of the investments estimates that in total around €767m had been invested in the HST investment locations.

60. In the South East of England, the HST projects supported key investments to improve access and assure transport's role in stimulating development and regeneration in Ashford, Ebbsfleet, Dover and Reading. The trans-national networking of the projects has led to strong relationships that will continue after the lifetime of the projects.

STRATEGIC INFLUENCE

Advocacy Programme

Eco Towns

61. CLG have published a draft Planning Policy Statement on Eco Towns with a consultation deadline of March 6. In addition it published Sustainability Appraisals of each Eco town and graded them accordingly. Whitehill/Bordon and Ford are both graded B and Weston Otmoor is the only Grade C. There were no Grade A's in the South East. SEEDA will respond to this consultation using evidence obtained from the economic appraisals that SEEDA has led on. SEEDA is active in the 3 Eco Town proposals in the South East. This work has generally been led by Planning Team and the relevant Area Team working together.

Bicester

62. The completed study by Arup Consultants (which SEEDA planning team managed) looking at the economic and social assessment of Weston Otmoor Eco Town on Bicester and Kidlington has confirmed the level of impact on the sub region. SEEDA are now working with Cherwell District Council, Oxfordshire County Council and Department of Communities and Local Government (CLG) to investigate if a suitable alternative to Weston Otmoor that could attract CLG funding would be the development of Eco-urban extension to Bicester that included Eco-retrofitting of Bicester. For example through retro fit of existing houses, new transport models and clean, secure energy supplies. Ongoing SEEDA input will be led by MKOB Area Team.

Ford

63. SEEDA co funded (together with Arun DC and the promoters of the eco town) a study looking at the impact of the eco town on the regeneration of Littlehampton and Bognor. This report was well received by all parties (including CLG). CLG is now funding an examination of alternatives to the eco town in terms of urban extensions to both towns (as part of LDF work) and SEEDA is represented on the Steering Group.

Whitehill/Bordon

64. SEEDA is represented on the Executive Group which is developing the proposals for this local authority led Eco town. We are also committed to co-funding a report looking at the economic impacts of the proposal.

Area Teams

Surrey and Berkshire Area Team

65. SEEDA hosted the Regional Economic Council in Reading supporting BERR with meeting arrangements and organising two business visits for the Secretary of State Lord Mandelson and the Chancellor Alistair Darling from which both gained useful business insights and learned how Reading businesses are responding to the recession. Lord Mandelson visited with Microsoft and met with their Managing Director and senior staff and the Chancellor toured Reading town centre's Business Improvement District (BID) where the businesses have recently sent a very strong message of confidence and have renewed BID for a further five years. He also had discussions with businesses from Thames Valley Enterprise Hub and heard how they are being supported by SEEDA.

Diamonds

66. SEEDA has held a meeting with Reading UK CIC and Matt Smith, SE Diamonds Network to commence support work on Reading Diamond. The Chief Executive of Reading Borough Council is keen to develop ways to bring all the unitary council partners together and has requested that SEEDA facilitate a round table discussion to foster collaborative working and clarify roles and contributions from partners.
67. SEEDA has met with BAA Heathrow Economic Development Manager to discuss and the creation of a new Heathrow Strategic Partnership that will drive forward the Heathrow 360⁰ initiative. This is a key element of the work of the Heathrow SWARM (internal group) that is preparing a plan of action to deal with issues raised by Heathrow that is being presented to the Board (Item 7 on the agenda for the March Board Meeting).

Sub-Regional Partnerships

68. The quarter three performance review of contract delivery has been completed for both Surrey Economic Partnership and Berkshire Economic Strategy Board. SEEDA is now working with the SRPs to undertake their year end reviews and evaluations that will contribute to the development of business plans for 2009-2010.

Programmes

69. SEEDA has met with Reading Borough Council and developed an economic business case for investment in Station Hill, Reading, in line with the overall plan for Reading town centre regeneration and development. This economic business case will be the core of discussions with Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) and English Heritage to encourage their support of the development.
70. SEEDA's Skills and Area Teams are working together to review how Employment and Skills Boards integration with Sub Regional Partnerships can be achieved in the coming year.

Hampshire and Isle of Wight Area Team

Cabinet Meeting in Southampton

71. The Prime Minister and Cabinet visited Southampton on 23 February for a Cabinet Meeting and a selection of visits across South Hampshire. The day was a fantastic opportunity to raise the national profile of South Hampshire and the Prime Minister commended the work of the Partnership for Urban South Hampshire (PUSH) and recognised the contribution of South Hampshire to the national economy.
72. SEEDA and GOSE had just 8 working days to organise visits for over 20 ministers with SEEDA leading on the business-themed visits and events. This included a working lunch for the Chancellor of the Exchequer with representatives of the marine sector, hosted by Jim Brathwaite. Meetings with IBM and Astrium were also organised by SEEDA and gave Ministers a valuable insight into SEEDA's investment and the opportunities and challenges facing the South East economy.
73. The business lunch provided the opportunity for Solent marine businesses to discuss with the Chancellor how their businesses are performing in the economic downturn, the opportunities for the sector and what the government should do in helping them prepare for the upturn.
74. Unfortunately Lord Mandelson had to return to London and was unable to visit two companies that had benefited from Business Link advice and the Transition Loan Fund. It is hoped that Board Members will be able to visit these companies at a later date.

Ford

75. SEEDA has worked with local partners to coordinate an integrated package of advice and support for employees at Ford Southampton. In early February, Ford announced a voluntary separation package for 400-500 employees to bring capacity in line with demand. On 6 March 2009, a "one-stop-shop" event backed by Southampton City Council, Eastleigh Borough Council, the Learning and Skills Council, Jobcentre Plus, Business Link and SEEDA was held for Ford employees and on-site supply chain workers. John Denham, MP for Southampton Itchen, was also in attendance. This event provided attendees with information to help them plan for the future and to make the most of other opportunities. This event was attended by approximately 800 people and feedback has been positive. SEEDA is also working with supply-chain companies both in the plant and across the South East.

Joint working with Hampshire County Council

76. Robert Crawford led a high level SEEDA delegation to meet the Chief Executive and senior directors at Hampshire County Council on 7 January. The very constructive discussions established broad consensus on critical issues and opportunities, setting out a preliminary framework of shared priorities to work on together. Outcomes included:
 - Agreement to explore joint investment planning to bring forward major development projects and enabling infrastructure
 - Adopting a county-wide, multi-agency approach to handle redundancies and support people into employment
 - Profiling the significance of economic development and place-shaping at the core of the Hampshire Senate's business

- Strengthening the role of Hampshire Economic Partnership and its work with top corporates in the county
- Further development of joint working on waste and renewable energy

Eastleigh Economic Task Force

77. SEEDA attended the Eastleigh Economic Task Force on 14 January. The group was set up to co-ordinate an effective local response to the economic downturn and to agree ways of working for the future. The aim of the meeting was to check for either 'gaps' or 'overlaps' in service provision and this format has been cited as a good model for future meetings. SEEDA, through the Area Team, provided an update of the sub-regional economic conditions and updated partners on the coordinated response that is being taken to redundancies, as seen at Ford.

Basingstoke's Functional Economic Area

78. Basingstoke are looking to work more closely with other Diamonds for Investment and Growth and work across local authority boundaries on issues such as inward investment.

79. To support this work, SEEDA assisted Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council in researching Basingstoke's Functional Economic Area. North Hampshire local authorities, Hampshire County Council and SEEDA met to discuss the findings on 3 March and agreed there was merit in working together on common issues. The next stage will involve establishing a solid evidence base to identify shared issues and opportunities for joint working.

Basingstoke Higher Education workshop

80. On 26 February Jay Hunt, Deputy Area Director for Hampshire and IoW led a workshop of universities and local stakeholders to further develop proposals for a Higher Education presence in Basingstoke. The following actions were agreed:

- Further market demand analysis needs to be undertaken to ascertain scale of demand
- Partners could trial HE activities in the soon to be established interim Innovation Centre
- Universities could club together under the Basingstoke Learning Campus banner to deliver services to employers in Basingstoke, potentially through a shared broker.
- Submit University Challenge capital proposal in the summer and investigate potential revenue options given the lack of additional student numbers available from The Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE).

PUSH Economic Development Panel

81. On 26 February, Kathy Slack, Area Director for Hampshire and IoW presented to the new PUSH Economic Delivery Panel, Chaired by the Leader of Winchester City Council, George Beckett on the impact of the economic downturn in South Hampshire and also initiated discussion on how to prepare for the upturn. Members of the panel have agreed to put a greater emphasis on inward investment, technologies and the needs of the key sectors.

Kent and Medway

Multi Area Agreement Signing Ceremony

82. Susan Priest, the SEEDA Kent and Medway Area Director, attended a Multi-Area Agreements (MAA) signing ceremony at 10 Downing Street on 12 January 2009. The Government signed the second wave of MAA agreements at the ceremony. This was a useful networking event which raised the profile of the North Kent MAA. The North Kent MAA is well on course for sign off in April 2009 subject to Government timetables.

Backing Kent Business

83. Kent County Council (KCC) called together a host of partners from the business community and support agencies in early January 2009, to see how they can work together to help business during this difficult economic period.
84. This followed an announcement by KCC in December of ten initiatives to help businesses of all sizes and raising awareness of public sector tendering opportunities.
85. It was agreed that a collective approach under the banner 'Backing Kent Business' would be welcome. This has resulted in Business Link, SEEDA, the local Chambers of Commerce, the Federation of Small Businesses, the Institute of Directors and other partners signing up to an 'Agreement to Action' at a business breakfast on 20 January.
86. The group has agreed to meet monthly while the economic downturn persists to ensure a county wide approach to helping business at this time.

Thames Gateway

87. The Joint Implementation Steering Group had its inaugural meeting with the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) on the 13 February. The meeting went well and a timetable for future meetings has been established.
88. A review of the Thames Gateway programme is currently being conducted by Her Majesty's Treasury Major Programme Review Group. This will review the deliverability, affordability and the value for money of the programme and the findings will influence the outcome of the Government's spending review.
89. SEEDA's Chief Executive was interviewed on the 27 February 2009 as part of this review.
90. The first meeting of the newly convened Thames Gateway Strategic Partnership took place on 20 February chaired by Sir Bob Kerlake, the Chief Executive of the Homes and Communities Agency and attended by SEEDA's Chief Executive. Future meetings are to be alternatively chaired by the Minister for Housing and Planning and the Thames Gateway, Margaret Beckett MP.

Kent County Council Framework for Regeneration

91. Kent County Council has published a framework for regeneration for 2009-2020. The Framework identifies the key opportunities and challenges that must be addressed in order to deliver long lasting regeneration in the county.
92. The framework is open for consultation until 17 April and the Kent and Medway area team are leading on SEEDA's response to the consultation.

Sussex Area Team

Innovation and Growth Teams (IGT's)

93. Two Innovation and Growth teams will soon to be established to cover the Gatwick Diamond and West Sussex area (East Surrey and West Sussex) and Brighton & Hove and East Sussex area. Both partnerships successfully completed the initial stage of the application process and are now developing business plans. East Sussex and Brighton and Hove partnership will proceed at a slightly slower rate than the other IGT's to allow more time for the Partnership to develop. The area teams are working very closely with partners to resolve issues around governance and delivery and to create a robust and innovative model that will benefit businesses across the area.

Gatwick Diamond

94. The Sussex Area Team continues to actively support the Gatwick Diamond which has a vision that: "By 2016, the Gatwick Diamond will be a world class, internationally recognized business location achieving sustainable prosperity"
95. The Gatwick Diamond is a business led public – private sector partnership. The new governance arrangements are now finalised with SEEDA having a strong representation across all three tiers.
96. An enhanced strategic alliance continues to develop between BAA Gatwick and SEEDA that will try to ensure the airport takes a full and inclusive role in the economic development opportunities for the Gatwick Diamond. A joint BAA / SEEDA workshop was held in March with the MD of BAA and his top team, and the COO and Directors of SEEDA. The meeting focused on sustainability, the Gatwick Diamond Future Plan and the sale of the Airport. To take this forward a small working group will be set up with BAA.
97. BAA Gatwick has a £840m investment programme for its terminals that Gatwick Diamond partners are seeking to ensure is developed in a sustainable way and importantly, support any future opportunities for Gatwick to provide connections to key world economic areas.
98. The University of Brighton are taking a lead role in the creation of a University Centre in the heart of Crawley that will support educational attainment, business demand and skills progression across the Gatwick Diamond. Supported by SEEDA, a demand study has been completed which supports the rationale for a University Centre. Investment will be sought from a range of partners including HEFCE, to realise the Centre. HEFCE's University Challenge criteria was launched on the 9 March 09 and the University of Brighton will submit a Statement of Intent in relation to Crawley in June 2009.

Coastal West Sussex

99. SEEDA, through the Area Team, is working closely with the University of Chichester, LSC, West Sussex County Council and other partners across the West Sussex Coastal area to redevelop the University of Chichester's campus. This redevelopment will support the wider regeneration opportunities for Coastal West Sussex as well as enabling the University to overhaul its curriculum and be much more responsive to the needs of business and resident communities.
100. To ensure the investments that are being made into education institutions across the whole of Coastal West Sussex have the desired impact on the local economy, the Coastal West Sussex Partnership Board will be strengthened

and a Coastal West Sussex Skills Group broadened to maximise the impact of education as a driver for economic regeneration. SEEDA has taken a lead role in this transition and will continue to support the Board

101. An event focusing on Education-Led Regeneration is to be held on Friday 13 March organised by the Area Team and the University of Chichester. The aim of the event is to gather political and institutional agreement and commitment to range actions that will maximise the economic potential of education investments across Coastal West Sussex.

West Sussex Business Support Workshop

102. To coordinate the publicly funded business support provision across West Sussex a workshop was held and supported by SEEDA, University of Brighton and Business Link. The purpose of the workshop was to increase knowledge of the delegates, encourage collaborations of partners and simplify the customer journey.

Brighton and Hove

103. SEEDA is working closely with Brighton and Hove City Council and the University of Brighton to realise the development opportunities of Preston Barracks. SEEDA will ensure that this development will support economic development, job creation and innovation.

Milton Keynes, Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Area Team

BMW Taskforce

104. On the 16 February BMW announced 850 job cuts to agency workers employed at their Oxfordshire plant. Learning from the experience with Ford in Eastleigh SEEDA immediately brought together a taskforce consisting of Jobcentre Plus, Learning & Skills Council, Business Link, Oxford City Council and Oxfordshire County Council, to put support in place. As a result Jobcentre Plus held a support session for affected staff on 18 February at the BMW plant. Oxfordshire Economic Partnership (the sub-regional partnership funded by SEEDA) subsequently brought together other related services for a further support session later in the month.
105. The Task Force has a wider remit than BMW; to prepare for any future major redundancies that may be announced in Oxfordshire. Using this experience SEEDA is now working with partners in Buckinghamshire and Milton Keynes to form an equivalent taskforce that will help ensure all major redundancies are handled quickly and effectively.

Milton Keynes HE and University Centre Milton Keynes (UCMK)

106. UCMK was formally opened in January by Hazel Blears, Minister for Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) on the 4 February 2009. The opening was attended by SEEDA Board Member Imtiaz Farookhi and the SEEDA Area Team. SEEDA had previously helped fund the fit out of this new University Centre and is currently an active member of the steering group successfully advocating the need for a full business plan to be developed to ensure the economic development opportunities are maximised.

Energy Technology Institute (ETI) Plug in Electric Vehicle infrastructure

107. SEEDA attended a meeting in Milton Keynes in March involving Nissan, Milton Keynes Council, BERR and others to scope out a potential bid into the ETI to support the deployment of an appropriate electric vehicle infrastructure for the

city. This provides a key opportunity to deliver against the RES sustainability objectives by providing a low carbon hybrid vehicle infrastructure in the city. SEEDA is working with Mercedes, the European Research and Design headquarters of Nissan based on Cranfield University's technology park and other automotive and engineering manufacturers to develop a knowledge transfer partnership possibly linked into the Milton Keynes Science and Innovation project.

Milton Keynes South Midlands (MKSM) Growth Area - Economic Development Implementation Plan

108. At the last Economic Development Group meeting the draft Economic Development Implementation Plan (EDIP) which SEEDA and EMDA had pulled together from the MKSM sector leads was discussed. The meeting gave a useful focus to the economic development aspect of the MKSM growth targets with the following key actions agreed were:

- Agreement that the focus of the group is on added value jobs rather than all the target 192,000 jobs, acting where there is clear value in working together across boundaries.
- Development of a central report on priority sector job and skills projections in MKSM to 2021
- EDIP needs to articulate innovation needs across the sectors more clearly

109. This focus has allowed SEEDA to further develop the EDIP and coordinate a further iteration of the implementation plan with the sector leads using evidenced data. The resulting plan should now be a clear articulation of where partners can work together across boundaries to deliver value added jobs.

110. To support this process SEEDA held an MKSM internal 'swarm' meeting on 19 February with the purpose of bringing together functional leads to discuss SEEDA's input into the MKSM growth area. A number of actions agreed at the meeting have already progressed which is very encouraging:

- Aylesbury Vale District Council has taken the lead on Broadband and their assistant CEO Tracey Aldworth and the SEEDA Area Team have had discussions to set up a meeting between HCA and SEEDA's lead, Peter Waller, to take the agenda forward.
- Christina Hartshorn (SEEDA's lead on Leadership Skills) has contacted the MKSM skills coordinator to exchange ideas on an MKSM leadership marketing campaign.

111. Using SEEDA's experience, the East Midlands Development Agency is now planning a similar event.

Inward Investment Propositions for Oxfordshire & Buckinghamshire

112. SEEDA is working with Oxfordshire Economic Partnership (OEP) and Buckinghamshire Economy & Learning Partnership on developing 'Area Propositions' for Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire. SEEDA held two workshops run by the Centre for Strategy and Evaluation Services as the first stage in developing an inward investment proposition for each area. The activity builds upon existing work of local partners. Within Oxfordshire it has been integrated into the Promoting Oxfordshire sub-group of OEP and will also link to Science Vale UK. Within Buckinghamshire it follows locally commissioned work being undertaken by the Urban Renaissance Institute which is looking to develop an operational strategy for inward investment.