

WIDER SOUTH EAST SUMMIT

11 December 2015

Annex 1 – Emerging consensus from Roundtables in July/September 2015**1. Emerging Consensus from Roundtables**

- 1.1 Following a Wider South East (WSE) Summit in March 2015, well-attended Roundtable discussions were set up to progress political discussion about future co-ordination/co-operation between the Mayor of London, the South East and East of England on high-level cross-boundary growth and infrastructure issues. Leaders from all councils and Local Enterprise Partnership representatives in the South East and East were invited to attend small Roundtable meetings with the GLA, with the first two sessions held on 10 July and a further three in September. Today's second WSE Summit on 11 December 2015 will consider the Roundtable findings and agree the way forward (*see paper for Agenda Items 2-4 re recommendations to Summit*).
- 1.2 Attendees at all Roundtable sessions supported the need for political engagement, with the following emerging consensus on four broad topics of discussion as identified by the independent facilitator (Phil Swann, from consultants Shared Intelligence):
- i. **Purpose/scope** - There must be a recognition of the importance of the strong mutual relationship between London, East and the South East. The focus must be on economic prosperity as well as housing, planning and environmental quality and must address transport and other strategic infrastructure in the wider sense. The purpose must relate to the strategic big picture, with mechanisms for more focused work on particular areas such as transport corridors. It will be important to prioritise, with an initial focus on housing and transport to underpin economic prosperity.
 - ii. **Geography** - The proposed mechanism should relate to the areas covered by London, East and South East of England. The focus should be on the area as a whole with mechanisms for more detailed work being done on specific localities as necessary. It would complement not duplicate cross-boundary relationships.
 - iii. **Political mechanisms** - The mechanisms should be bureaucratically light and remain flexible. They should enable different voices to be heard and not be dominated by a particular place or type of council. The principles of the proposed arrangements should be:
 - there should be an inclusive annual summit, with a clear task/purpose;
 - the work between summits should be steered by a workable small executive. East of England, South East and London should be free to appoint their representatives in a way that suits their area, but the arrangements should be politically and geographically representative;
 - there must be highly effective communication mechanisms between meetings to ensure accountability and progress;
 - where appropriate steering mechanisms should be established for work on particular corridors or areas.
 - iv. **Support and resources** - Consideration must be given to developing a shared understanding of evidence/data relevant to future political working, building on existing work and information. It was agreed that a short note should be produced on the actions currently in hand to progress this and the likely timescales (*see Annex 2*).
More generally, any officer arrangements to support the political mechanisms must be light touch and build on existing arrangements. More engagement from London beyond the Mayor is required. Opportunities to tap into resources such as those available to the Local Enterprise Partnerships outside London should also be explored.

2. Emerging key actions for WSE political engagement to initially focus on?

- Information needs/sharing data & understanding of evidence.
- Emerging timetable/work programme and growth options for the London Plan Review.
- Emerging shared issues of concern for early joint action – initial suggestions are:
 - 'Contract' based approach to expediting housing delivery (also known as 'use it, lose it or pay for it').
 - Explore transport investment/existing agreed corridor-based development.