

REVIEW OF STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS

VIEWS RECEIVED AND UPDATE ON OTHER RELATED ISSUES

(A) VIEWS RECEIVED

1. Babergh East LSP

The Board considered this matter at its meeting on 10 April and fully support the recommendation in paragraph 2.1 of Paper G230.

2. Suffolk Development Agency

The SDA were grateful for the opportunity to comment on Paper G230 which was discussed recently by the Executive Committee. As a result the following comments are submitted for taking into consideration by Babergh Members:-

- a) The SDA was asked to complete and return a form which was done. However, there was no additional face-to-face or telephone consultation with the SDA Chief Executive or SDA Chairman or senior staff which would have been welcomed (Note: no face to face or telephone interviews were carried out with external partners).
- b) With regard to paragraph (d) on page 4 of Paper G230 the future of the SDA will be determined by its partners which includes all local authorities and EEDA.
- c) With regard to Appendix 1 of Paper G230 (pages 7 and 8) the SDA comment as follows:-

Cost

Babergh DC contributes £25,060 to SDA core activity (already confirmed and agreed for 2008-09) and an additional £8,000 for Suffolk Tourism Partnership (managed by SDA).

Geographical Fit

The SDA was created in 1999 by all Local Authorities. Haven Gateway was given SREP status by EEDA at a later date and thus created an overlap with the area covered by SDA.

There is no evidence to suggest that the Suffolk geographical area is 'not necessarily right for Babergh'.

With regard to the SSP this was created recently. The SSP is responsible for the Suffolk Community Strategy and SDA has the strategic responsibility for leading on the economic development and prosperity areas of the strategy. SDA Chairs the LAA Block 4 (economic) committee of the Community Strategy. SDA represented on SSP by SDA Chairman and CE. There is very minimal overlap if any.

Effective Governance

Suffolk Development Agency Board has senior representation from EEDA and Government Office who attend regularly. Sheila Childerhouse, EEDA Board Member has a seat on the SDA board. Business representatives do attend on a regular basis and no evidence to suggest that they do not attend if issues do not affect them.

Scale of Critical Issues

SDA is the designated sub-regional economic partnership for Suffolk and develops a 3-5 economic development strategy (Expanding Suffolk's Horizons) on behalf of and in consultation with all LA's. The roles and functions of the SDA are varied and is more than just a strategic body. The core functions and responsibilities include:

- Economic Strategy (Expanding Suffolk's Horizons)
- Lobbying and influencing regional agendas e.g. transport, rural etc
- Inward Investment, enterprise and business engagement (working with East of England International and LA's)
- Tourism Marketing (Suffolk Tourism Partnership)
- Economic Intelligence and research (Suffolk Observatory)
- Choose Suffolk marketing campaign
- Project management
- Sector Development, research and marketing e.g. IP-City Network, Food Hub, Renewable Energy

Sustainability/Capacity

SDA currently produces an annual business plan for EEDA core funding (which represents approx 45% of overall SDA budget). SDA planning to produce a broader corporate plan later in the year. More funding is now being attracted from elsewhere for specific projects.

SDA has the same status as Haven Gateway Partnership (HGP) as a Sub-Regional Economic Partnership (SREP) and any decisions on funding SREP's in future will affect both SDA and HGP. Results of review of SREP's are due to be released September 2008 at the earliest.

All Sub-Regional Economic Partnerships were subjected to an independent performance assessment in recent months, led by EEDA. As a result, SDA is seen as one of the top performing SREP's in the region (out of 9) and was classified as 'performing well'.

(B) UPDATE ON OTHER RELATED ISSUES

(i) Financial Implications

If the Committee support the recommendation to approach the Haven Gateway Partnership seeking the inclusion of the whole of the area of the Babergh District within the Haven Gateway there will be an additional membership fee of £2,500 which can be met from existing budgets.

(ii) Review of Economic Partnerships

The second paragraph of section d) on page 4 of Paper G230 refers to Suffolk local authorities seeking advice on the best arrangements for taking forward the economic development of Suffolk in partnership with business and other stakeholders.

Suffolk County Council has now advised that Globe Economic Development have been engaged to carry out a review of economic partnerships. A small steering group, with district representation, has been established to work with the consultants.

The objectives of the review are to produce a proposal for the future shape and role of an overarching public/private economic partnership in Suffolk including the following functions:-

- Strategy development
- Programme and project development and delivery
- Inward investment
- Research and analysis
- Tourism
- Business support

Tim Mutum
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