

SUB NATIONAL REVIEW (SNR) IMPLEMENTATION IN THE EAST OF ENGLAND

Agenda Item 6b

Portfolio Area: Strategy
Report Presented by: Councillor Graham Butland, Leader of the Council

Background Papers:
Corporate Implications: Please refer to table at end of report
Options: To support or not, the establishment of a Leaders' Board
Risks: Not engage at a regional level and therefore not influence policy and direction.

Executive Summary

As part of the Sub National Review implementation, proposals have been developed for regional governance.

The Motion passed by the Regional Assembly is set out in Appendix 1. With regard to the invitation in the EERA Chief Executive letter dated 23rd July 2009, it is not the intention to offer to host any of the current regional bodies; it is considered more appropriate for the Counties or Unitaries to host such bodies.

Decision

To support the proposals for a Leaders' Board as part of the revised regional governance resulting from the Sub National Review.

Corporate Implications

Financial:	NONE			
Legal:	NONE			
Equalities & Diversity:	NONE			
Customer Impact:	NONE			
Environment & Climate Change:	NONE			
Consultation/Community Engagement:	Local Committees	N/A	Partners	N/A
	Public	N/A	Staff	N/A
Key Decision:	No			
Public/Private Report:	Public			
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Regional Assembly Meeting – 17th July 2009**Motion passed by the Assembly (45 votes to 10) after a division– Item 7****Sub National Review Implementation**

The Assembly:

- a) Welcomes, and approves for its interests, the final report from the SNR Members' Task Group, and particularly the conclusions and recommendations as follows:
 1. That the revised fully inclusive model for an East of England Local Authorities' Leaders' Board as set out in Annex C to the Task Group's report be recommended to the Assembly, (and a separate future meeting of Council Leaders), for endorsement.
 2. That subject to any further refinements considered necessary as a result of the ongoing consultation exercise on the composition of the Regional Strategy Board and other matters, for the interests of local authorities and stakeholders in the region the composition of the Regional Strategy Board be noted meantime as detailed in Annex C to the Task Group's report, and as described in the report.
 3. That, subject to the ongoing consultation on the composition of the Regional Strategy Board the draft Constitution for the East of England Local Authorities' Leaders' Board as set out in Annex D to the Task Group's report be recommended for acceptance by the Assembly (and a separate future meeting of Council Leaders).
 4. That it be noted that the draft Constitution and other proposals made in the report are explicitly premised on the need for streamlining, including a lower level of local authority subscriptions, and a different approach to 'regionalism', emphasising a bottom up approach and some new models of regional service delivery.
 5. That subject to the provisos in recommendation 4 above most regional functions should continue to be organised through a streamlined Regional Secretariat, working under the overall direction of an appointed local authority Lead Chief Executive, but that the region's local authorities should have an opportunity to consider if they would wish to provide lead responsibility for particular defined services and functions on behalf of the region's local authorities as a whole.
 6. That further organisational design and financial modelling work be progressed and completed as soon as possible and with a

view to the overall management and staffing structures for the new Leaders' Board organisation being agreed and communicated to staff by Autumn 2009 at the latest.

7. That all further decisions on SNR matters are taken by EERA Group Leaders, and the EERA Executive Committee (if appropriate) and progressively by the new East of England Local Authorities' Leaders' Board, meeting on a shadow basis as necessary until formal responsibilities are transferred in April 2010, subject to the progress of the legislation.

- b) Authorises the EERA Secretariat to convene a meeting of the Leaders of all Local Authorities in the East of England in September 2009 to consider the Task Group's report and other relevant business, on the understanding that such a meeting would be held outside of EERA's meeting protocols and constitution; and

- c) Expresses its thanks to the Task Group for their deliberations over the past 9 months and for the quality of their report.



Chairman: John Reynolds

Chief Executive: Brian Stewart

To all Local Authority Chief Executives in the East of England

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23 July 2009

Important: For your personal attention

Dear Colleague

Sub National Review Implementation in the East of England

I am writing to draw to your personal attention some important news regarding how SNR is proposed to be implemented in the East of England. Subject to the progress of the required legislation, a new Leaders' Board will be established in shadow form shortly, and which will be the successor body to EERA from 1st April 2010.

I am attaching a resolution from the EERA meeting held last Friday which received a report from the EERA SNR Members' Task Group which examined constitutional options for a post EERA and SNR compliant Leaders' Board model. The somewhat different Leaders' Board model now put forward reflects the helpful comments received from local authorities and other regional partners to the 'End of an EERA' consultation earlier this year. While EERA resources have been used to develop the thinking behind any new arrangements triggered by the implementation of SNR we have always been sensitive to views that final decisions on any new arrangements should be taken by Council Leaders themselves. **Accordingly, I would ask you to ensure that your Council Leader is aware that he/she will shortly receive an invitation from me to attend a meeting of all of the Council Leaders in the East of England on Friday 18th September 2009 at 2.00 p.m. at the Trinity Centre, Cambridge.** The purpose of that meeting will allow Council Leaders to consider the SNR Task Group's final report for their own interests and to agree to meet in shadow form pending the formal designation of the East of England Leaders' Board by Government later in the year and with formal responsibilities, as set out in the Local Democracy Economic Development and Construction Bill being assumed in April 2010. Although convened by EERA this meeting will be outside of EERA's agreed meeting protocols, and will be a strictly private meeting of Council Leaders, or their nominated representatives. **It will be important for every council to be represented.**

You will see from the EERA resolution attached that any new Leaders' Board regional organisation will require to be streamlined and to draw more heavily on the collective resources and leadership of local authorities. Part of the Assembly

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resolution authorises me to test out with the region's local authorities whether there is any interest in certain continuing discretionary regional functions being managed by particular local authorities on behalf of the region as a whole. **I would therefore invite you to indicate to me by Friday 21st August if your council would be interested, in principle and without commitment, in providing the following functions on behalf of the region as a whole:**

- a) Accountable body and host organisation for **Improvement East**; the region's improvement and efficiency partnership, with its own budget guaranteed to March 2011, strategy and decision making structures.
- b) Management responsibility for the **East of England Brussels Office**, where all costs are currently met from EERA's subscription income from local authorities and some other regional partners, and where an appropriate staff and resource transfer would need to be made to the local authority concerned to support any future arrangement.

In addition, it is proposed that instead of there being a Leaders' Board Secretariat Chief Executive, one of the serving local authority Chief Executives in the region would be appointed by the Leaders' Board to be the Lead Chief Executive, and Head of the Paid Service on an honorary basis for the streamlined Leaders' Board Secretariat, supported by a secretariat senior management team. This further reflects efforts to streamline and reflect a very different approach to regional local government services. The role of Lead Chief Executive is set out in the draft Constitution for the Leaders' Board which was submitted to the Assembly meeting on 17th July and which can be accessed from the EERA website under 'Meetings and Events'. Again, **if you have any personal interest in being considered for this possible role then please let me know, in strictest confidence, and by Friday 21st August.** I have already agreed with the Assembly's Group Leaders that after 10 years as EERA Chief Executive I will be retiring in late March 2010.

Finally, although you should have received notification of it through other means I would draw your attention to an ongoing consultation jointly issued by EEDA and EERA 'Moving to the new Single Regional Strategy' **which is open to 31st July 2009** and which can be accessed from the EERA website under 'Consultations'. This consultation gives local authorities and other partners an opportunity to comment on the relationship between an East of England Leaders' Board comprised of 52 Council Leaders (and a representative of the Broads Authority) and the smaller Regional Strategy Board comprised of 10 members of the Leaders' Board, together with EEDA and some other key delivery partners.

Should you have any queries about any aspects of this letter please do not hesitate to be in touch.

Yours sincerely



Brian Stewart
Chief Executive