

In-depth Scrutiny Project – Final Report



Economic growth aspirations for Southend-on-Sea

January 2006

Economic Scrutiny Committee

Southend-on-Sea Borough Council



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FOREWORD

Councillor Delaney, Chairman of Southend-on-Sea Borough Council's Economic Scrutiny Committee:

The Economic Scrutiny Committee decided that its in-depth Scrutiny Project should be on the development of an 'Economic Development Policy Statement' setting out how the Council should utilise its assets, policies, powers and influence to assist in achieving the jobs target within a sustainable economic base.

It was agreed that the scrutiny would undertake a broad strategic review of the existing economic climate in Southend in order to establish options for achieving net growth targets of 13,000 additional jobs in the borough over the period 2001-2021 (as set out in Draft Regional Spatial Strategy 14 – The East of England Plan). This means that the economy of Southend must diversify and grow in order to achieve these targets.

The theme of the project was agreed at the Economic Scrutiny Committee in September 2004. We held five witness sessions between April – July 2005. The purpose of the witness sessions was to consult with key organisations to understand their perceptions of how to achieve this job growth, barriers to achievement and interventions that may assist in achieving growth. We also contacted by letter other key stakeholders, and we are grateful for the time taken by them to give us their views on the questions we posed.

We would like to thank all those who have been involved in the in-depth Scrutiny project, those who took the time to attend meetings to give their evidence, and our colleagues on the Economic Scrutiny Committee and the Project Team. We would like to thank the former Chairman of the Committee, Councillor Murray Foster, for his work and support.

Councillor Tony Delaney, Chairman

January 2006

1. SCOPE, OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

The Scope of the Scrutiny: Objectives and Outcomes

- 1.1 In the Municipal year 2004/05, the Council's Economic Scrutiny Committee agreed that the in-depth scrutiny project would be 'Economic growth aspirations for Southend-on-Sea'. It was agreed that the scrutiny would undertake a broad strategic review of the existing economic climate in Southend in order to establish options for achieving the net growth target of 13,000 additional jobs in the Borough over the period 2001 to 2021 (as set out in Draft Regional Spatial Strategy 14 – The East of England Plan (RSS14)) within a sustainable and balanced economy. The wider aspirations of the Thames Gateway and the Government's Sustainable Communities Plan would also be considered.
- 1.2 The outcomes and objectives agreed by the Committee on 29th September 2004 were that the scrutiny would result in the production of an 'Economic Development Policy Statement' setting out how the Council would utilise its assets, policies, powers and influence to assist in achieving the jobs target within a sustainable local economic base.

It was agreed that this would be achieved by, and would incorporate:

- An examination of the current economic position of Southend-on-Sea through the use of a PESTLE analysis (Political/economic/social/technological/legal and environmental);
- A review of the policy context within which Southend-on-Sea is set and the implications for future economic growth. Consideration will be given to Southend's role within Thames Gateway and the growth targets set in the Regional Spatial Strategy 14 to 2021.
- Options for the short, medium and long term actions that could be pursued by the Council to achieve the vision of the local economy in 2021 (as set out in the Southend Community Plan and the Renaissance Southend Business Plan¹), including employment growth targets.
- A consideration by the Council of the roles and responsibilities it would envisage partner organisations undertaking to achieve the vision of the local economy in 2021 (as set out in the Southend Community Plan and the Renaissance Southend Business Plan), including employment growth targets.

Methodology/Process

- 1.3 The Scrutiny was carried out by the Economic Scrutiny Committee supported by an Officer Project Team comprising:
- Fiona Abbott Principal Committee Officer, Project Coordinator;
 - Jane Whalley Administrative Support Officer;
 - Lee Harris Corporate Officer (for strategic issues);

¹ This includes linkages to the local Development Framework Core Strategy Development Plan Document and the Annual Monitoring report requirements.

- Alison Jennings Economic Development Manager;
 - James Roberts Researcher (has now left the authority);
 - Supported by Zoe Manning (has now left the authority), Viv Burdon and Lucy Bird (Strategic Planning)
 - Mark Murphy Service Manager.
- 1.4 The following Members were attached to the Project Team in order to provide guidance and to act as a consultative body during the course of the Scrutiny:
- Councillor Delaney, Chairman (Conservative)
 - Councillor Briggs, Vice Chairman from June 2005 onwards (Conservative)
 - Councillor Brian Smith (Liberal Democrat)
 - Councillor David Norman (Labour)
 - Councillor Martin Terry (Independent)
 - And also Councillor Murray Foster, Chairman until May 2005 (Conservative)
- 1.5 The scrutiny project commenced on 29th September 2004, when the Economic Scrutiny Committee approved the project plan. An update report was agreed on 3rd February 2005.
- 1.6 The Committee held a special meeting on 9th March 2005. At this meeting, the Committee looked at the parameters/suggested questions for the witnesses and also discussed the PESTLE analysis undertaken which examined the current economic position of Southend-on-Sea.
- 1.7 The briefing material provided the necessary background information for five formal public evidence-giving sessions ('witness' sessions) at which the Committee received oral, written and presentational evidence from a large number of key stakeholders.
- 1.8 Prior to the commencement of the witness sessions, Members and the Project Team identified, devised and documented the questions which were to be asked of each witness, and identified further areas for research.

Evidence Gathering

- 1.9 The Committee agreed who should be approached as possible 'witnesses' and invitations were sent out for the witness sessions scheduled for April – July 2005, as follows:
- Representative from Thames Gateway South Essex;
 - Representative from EEDA;
 - Representative from University of Essex (Southend);
 - Representative from the Learning and Skills Council (LSC);
 - Representative from ODPM;
 - Executive Councillors for Planning and Regional Development; Leisure, Culture & Sport; Regeneration & Economic Development;
 - Representatives from businesses & retail witnesses (KeyMed, Dedmans, RBS, Debenhams, Ravens) – group/focus session. In the end it was not possible to hold a group/focus session and the scrutiny committee met with KeyMed and Dedmans. RBS provided written evidence;

- Representative of East of England Tourist Board;
- Representative from South East Essex College;
- Representative from Southend Airport;
- Chairman or Representative from Renaissance Southend.

Written contributions were invited from the following:

- English Partnerships;
- Two Colleges in the Borough (Prospects College and Adult Community College)
- SEAL;
- BEASEA (Business Advice Centre);
- Chamber of Commerce;
- Federation of Small Businesses;
- Southend Business & Tourism Partnership;
- London Road Traders, Southchurch Road Traders, Leigh Traders
- SAVS, on behalf of the voluntary sector;
- Southend Seafront & Illuminations Business Association;
- Rochford District, Castle Point Borough, Thurrock and Basildon Councils.

- 1.10 The Committee accepted both oral and written evidence invited from the local community, relevant organisations and related agency officers. All the evidence was received in public under the "Local Government Access to Information Rules".
- 1.11 In order to facilitate the process all witnesses were informed, in writing, of the questions that were to be asked at the witness session.

Stakeholders

- 1.12 Through the witness sessions, the Committee received evidence from the following individuals and associated organisations, to whom the Council is grateful:-

Witness Session 1 held on 13th April 2005

- (a) Mr. John Pennington, Head of Special Projects Division - Dedmans;
- (b) Mr. Mike Batty, Head of Facilities - Keymed;
- (c) Mr. Bruce Campbell and Mr. Mark Baker – Southend Airport;
- (d) Mr. Mike Dowdall – East of England Tourist Board

Witness Session 2 held on 15th April 2005

- (a) Councillor David Garston – Portfolio Holder;
- (b) Janice Logie, Director of Skills & Comm Learning – Learning & Skills Council (LSC);
- (c) Linda Jones – University of Essex

Witness Session 3 held on 9th May 2005

- (a) Mr. A Pollock – Thames Gateway South Essex Partnership;
- (b) Sue Coole – South East Essex College (SEEC);
- (c) Mr. Stuart Greengrass – Renaissance Southend;

- (d) Councillor A North – Portfolio Holder and John Dallaway – Director of Leisure, Culture and Amenity Services

Witness Session 4 held on 26th May 2005

- (a) Mr. Bill Mossman – Head of Operations, Business Link 4 Essex;
(b) Councillor Anna Waite – Leader of the Council

Witness Session 5 held on 11th July 2005

- (a) Mr. Jamie Merrick - EEDA

1.13 Written contributions were received from:

- Basildon District Council;
- Rochford District Council
- London Road Traders' Association – Huff and Puff, S & A Supplies, Gilberts.
- Southend Enterprise Agency Ltd.
- Southend Seafront Illuminations & Business Association
- The Business Advice Centre
- Thurrock Council;
- RBS
- Castle Point Borough Council
- English Partnerships
- Southend Adult Community College

A copy of the questions posed to each witness/evidence giver is attached at **Appendix 1** and the information provided is given at **Appendix 2**.

1.14 **Attendance at Scrutiny Committee and the witness sessions**

A list of the Economic Scrutiny Committee Members who took part in the Scrutiny Committee meetings, the witness sessions and the special meetings on 9th March 2005, 25th August 2005 and 1st December 2005 is detailed at **Appendix 3**.

2. MAIN ISSUES FOR THE SCRUTINY

Main issues for Scrutiny

- 2.1 The initial phase of the Scrutiny exercise involved research into the main issues in relation to the subject matter of the Scrutiny. At the meeting held on 9th March 2005, the Committee received a detailed report which set out the Phase 1 baseline analysis which examined the current economic position of Southend-on-Sea.
- 2.2 The information was considered at a special meeting of the scrutiny committee held on 9th March 2005. This provided a P(olitical) E(conomic) S(ocial) T(echnological) L(egal) and E(nvironmental) summary analysis for the scrutiny process.
- 2.3 A number of Acts provide the legal framework within which local authorities can exercise their economic development powers. The Local Government Act 2000 removed the previous statutory requirement to produce an Economic Development Strategy, but placed a duty on all Local Authorities to promote the economic well-being of their communities. The Act recognised how essential an integrated approach to improving economic, social and environmental well-being is to improving health and reducing inequalities. This integrated approach is provided for in the Community Plan for Southend.
- 2.4 The scrutiny looked at the following areas:
- Political & Policy Drivers
 - Economic analysis and headline statistics – including skills levels in the local economy²
 - Social context and external funding
 - Technological and environmental issues
- 2.5 Political & Policy Drivers - Southend is part of Thames Gateway South Essex, a national regeneration priority. The political and policy environment within which the Borough Council administration operates is driven by national and regional agenda resulting from major changes over the last 20 years. The scrutiny considered the changes and the background to the existing policy and political climate.
- 2.6 Economic analysis and headline statistics - Southend is set within, and subject to, the macroeconomic conditions of the United Kingdom, which is a key figure in the global economy. The key drivers of the Southend economy are outside the authority's control, such as interest rates and oil prices. As a Council, Southend has the opportunity to influence the local conditions for the benefit of the people and businesses of the Borough. The scrutiny considered the current demographic and economic profile of Southend to interpret the data and build in any issues that may affect the delivery of 13,000 net additional jobs in Southend.
- 2.7 Social context and external funding – an examination of some of the social and external factors which influence the economic development of Southend, including deprivation and sources of funding.

² Whilst not directly part of this research, the report provided some overview information of the existing skills levels in the local economy.

- 2.8 Technological and environmental issues – considered issues relating to how technology and the environment have an impact on the economic development and growth of an area.
- 2.9 The main conclusions to emerge were:
- 2.9.1 The political and policy environment within which the Council administration operates is driven by national and regional agendas. These include the Sustainable Communities Plan which aims to co-ordinate the efforts of all levels of Government and Stakeholders in bringing about development that meets the economic, social and environmental needs of future generations as well as succeeding now. The aim of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 is to deliver communities that are sustainable and places that work better for people. The Regional Economic Strategy (RES) identifies the eight strategic goals for the East of England, whilst the East of England Plan 2004 outlines a number of objectives in relation to the Thames Gateway South Essex region and specifically for Southend:
- to become a cultural and intellectual hub
 - to deliver 13,000 net additional jobs in Southend between 2001 and 2021
 - a step change in the provision of transport infrastructure, including the upgrade of the A127 and A13
 - expansion of Southend as a Regional Airport
 - to deliver 6,000 net additional dwellings between 2001 and 2021.
- 2.9.2 At a local level Thames Gateway South Essex and Renaissance Southend are driving forward developments.
- 2.9.3 The scrutiny identified a number of key statistics for Southend:
- population of approximately 160,000³.
 - seventh densest population in the UK (excluding London).
 - a high proportion of residents over 65 years of age.
 - a low proportion of resident population between the ages of 15 and 30.
 - 4.2% of Southend's population is non-white.
 - unemployment stands at 5.2% (higher than national, regional and county figures).
 - the majority of Southend residents work within the retail/wholesale sector (which concurs with the national trend for the most popular sector to work).
 - 65% of people live and work in the Borough.
 - Southend is a net exporter of jobs.
 - Southend has approximately 6,500 businesses.
- 2.9.4 There are a number of social and external factors which influence the economic development of Southend. These include levels of deprivation - Southend has 25 Super Output Areas (SOAs) ranked in the most disadvantaged 25% of England. Southend has been able to benefit from various funding programmes to support economic growth and development, such as Objective 2, Lottery, Single Regeneration Budget (SRB) and ODPM Sustainable Communities. In the future there is the potential to benefit from Neighbourhood Renewal Fund (NRF),

³ Although the Council disputes this figure and is continuing to work with ONS.

Business Improvement Districts (BIDs), Local Authority Business Growth Incentives (LABGI), ODPM and Investing in Communities (IIC).

- 2.9.5 Technological and environmental issues also play a contributory role. Technological advances influence changes in working practice, the establishment of new businesses, marketing, etc. The primary environmental considerations relate to limited land availability, sustainable transport and infrastructure development and waste management, and the poor quality of existing land and industrial buildings.
- 2.10 This baseline analysis set out the existing economic climate and the external environment for Southend and guided phase 2 of the work programme (witness sessions), ultimately leading to the development of the Economic Development Policy Statement.
- 2.11 The scrutiny committee and the project team formulated the questions for the witnesses and other evidence givers, and determined the information the questions would seek to obtain – namely:
- How can Southend deliver these jobs?
 - Is it feasible or aspirational?
 - What are Southend's aspirations?
 - What barriers exist?
 - How will the Council use its powers to achieve this?
- 2.12 The 'witnesses' were grouped into four sectors:
- Business
 - Portfolio Holders
 - Regional Partners
 - Education Sector

A copy of the questions posed to each witness/evidence giver is attached at **Appendix 1** and the replies given are attached at **Appendix 2**.

3 ISSUES TO EMERGE DURING THE EVIDENCE GATHERING FROM STAKEHOLDERS

3.1 As indicated earlier in this report, whilst background knowledge and understanding of the issues were obtained from Officers and a range of data sources, including document review and statistical information bases, formal evidence-taking sessions with key witnesses informed the scrutiny process through their experience and knowledge working in the key sectors.

3.2. A detailed record of general comments and specific responses to questions posed by Members of the Committee was prepared. This record of evidence was forwarded to the representative in order to ensure that the recorded evidence was factually correct.

3.3. The questions for the witnesses were sent to the witnesses prior to their attendance at the Committee. Letters were sent to other evidence givers, inviting them to comment on the questions posed by the Committee.

3.4. Analysis of Witness Sessions

All the witness statements and other contributions were reviewed and key statements extracted. These were collated against primary themes and the number of times a primary theme was referred to was recorded. (The frequency of referral did not necessarily indicate the exact number of comments - this is due to a theme being raised by a witness but covering different secondary themes within this). A summary of the information provided at the witness sessions can be found at **Appendix 4**.

3.5. The prioritised list of primary themes⁴, identified through the witness analysis process were:

- Skills development
- Infrastructure
- Leisure
- Image/marketing/promotion
- Business retention, inward investment, SME start ups
- Property stocks
- Technological
- Retail
- Housing
- Land availability

3.6 The scrutiny considered the primary themes and gave them a priority ranking. This work informed the discussions by the Project Team and the scrutiny Committee and helped to formulate work on the Economic Development Policy Statement. The scrutiny also considered whether the responsibility for taking forward a priority was one for the Council or for partner organisations, to achieve

⁴ The primary themes emerged as a result of the number of responses that were given on each of the topics. An analysis was carried out of each of the points that had been raised in the witness sessions and these were grouped together.

the vision of the local economy in 2021 (as set out in the Southend Community Plan and the Renaissance Southend Business Plan).

3.7 The scrutiny also looked at options for the short (0 -2 years), medium (2 – 5 years) and long term (5 – 10 years, through to 2011⁵) actions that could be pursued by the Council to achieve the vision of the local economy in 2021. Following review, these were revised to represent the interim timescales as set out in the Regional Economic Strategy to 2011.

3.8 The scrutiny process identified the key sectors that the Borough Council wishes to develop in the future which will contribute to a diverse and sustainable economy.

3.9 **Growth sectors:**

The growth sectors have been identified by the witnesses and analysed by the scrutiny, as follows

- Aviation/airport and associated industries including avionics, advanced engineering and ICT;
- Health & medical industries including advanced engineering/equipment used in medical related fields;
- Business and financial services, including access to finance, legal advice and back office functions;
- Cultural & intellectual hub and HE centre of excellence, including the university and creative & new media sectors;
- Tourism & leisure (for example seafront offer, museums, hotel, conference and casino, and long-term opportunities from Olympics).

⁵ The Regional Economic Strategy identifies an interim nominal jobs growth target of 5,000 net jobs by 2011.

4. CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1 The Committee undertook a thorough review, in line with the objectives of the study, including a significant and wide-ranging input from stakeholders, which gave it a thorough understanding of the issues.
- 4.2 The final stage in the scrutiny process was to develop an Economic Development Policy Statement, based on the findings of the baseline study / witness sessions and the prioritisation exercise conducted by the Scrutiny Committee. The Policy Statement is set out in the next section of this report.
- 4.3 One of the main aims of the scrutiny process was to try to establish a clearer definition of how to measure the jobs created 2001 – 2021. The answers provided by the witnesses did not provide a clearer definition and highlighted deficiencies in the accuracy of data sources to measure jobs numbers⁶.
- 4.4 The Council needs to consider the roles and responsibilities it would envisage partner organisations undertaking to achieve the vision of the local economy in 2021 (as set out in the Southend Community Plan and the Renaissance Southend Business Plan), including employment growth targets.

⁶ One witness stated that the Census provided the most accurate data to measure job growth. Another witness stated that information provided through the Census was deficient as it did not reflect whether an employee lived in or commuted to Southend for work.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT POLICY STATEMENT FOR SOUTHEND-ON-SEA BOROUGH COUNCIL

1. INTRODUCTION

This Economic Development Policy Statement has been formulated following the Economic Scrutiny Committee in-depth scrutiny process, undertaken between 2004 and 2005.

This document sets out how Southend-on-Sea Borough Council will utilise its assets, policies and influence to assist in achieving the 13,000 net jobs targets (as identified in the Regional Spatial Strategy RSS 14 - The East of England Plan), within a sustainable local economic base between the period 2001-2021 and encouraging a 'business-ready' environment.

The Regional Economic Strategy (RES), which sets the long-term vision for sustainable economic development of the East of England, identifies an interim nominal jobs growth target of 5000 net jobs by 2011. Based on this target date, a series of destination statements have been generated to identify where the Council wishes to be by 2011, informed by the scrutiny process (see Addendum).

2. CONTEXT

National Policy

Southend forms part of the Thames Gateway, the national and regional priority for regeneration and growth, and is informed by the Government's Sustainable Communities Plan (February 2003) which sets out the Government's growth targets over the next 15-30 years in both urban and rural areas.

Regional Policy

The RES, as mentioned above, should be considered alongside the regional spatial strategy for the East of England (RSS14) which covers the period up to 2021. The strategy is the framework within which many different organisations can work with businesses, communities and individuals to improve the region's economic performance and the quality of life of those who live and work there; it focuses on things that are important at the level of the region. It is about agreeing regional goals, priorities and actions and promoting more effective co-ordination of activities, and is both strategic and action-oriented being strategic means making choices about the most important economic development issues facing the region.

The southern part of the Thames Gateway sub region is designated as Thames Gateway South Essex (TGSE), which is recognised to have the potential to make a major contribution to improvement of the region's economy, as well as being a priority for regeneration and growth as mentioned above. The RSS sets out the policies for TGSE area and establishes three complimentary regeneration hubs and 'zones of change' of which Southend is identified as a cultural and intellectual hub and a higher education centre of excellence. TGSE policy also sets out the target of 13,000 net additional jobs for the town by 2021.

Local Conditions

Southend had a population of 160,257 (Census 2001), with mid-year estimates from the Office of National Statistics reporting a population of circa 158,000. Southend has a lower than average percentage of 16-74 years old in full-time employment compared to Essex, and the East of England and nationally. The unemployment rate (between March 2003 – February 2004) was an average of 5.2% with the claimant count at 2.6% with 2,433 people claiming unemployment benefits. Southend historically has a higher unemployment rate than the surrounding areas, which is a common trend for traditional UK seaside resorts where people may retire to (*Seaside Economy June, 2003*). Southend has a higher proportion of self-employed workers than at the national and regional level, which may reflect Southend's small business and enterprise culture.

The following trends can be seen in the occupational structure of Southend: a decrease (of 4.8%) in administrative and secretarial occupations - this can probably be apportioned to the increased use of technology in the workplace; an increase (of 4%) in elementary occupations including occupations which require the knowledge and experience necessary to perform mostly routine tasks, examples of this being labouring, waiting at tables, etc; a decrease (1.9%) in process plant and machine operatives, which is in line with the national trend; an increase (2.0%) in professional occupations, which may be due to an increasing skills base as a result of increased participation in Higher Education as a result of improved access to further and higher education opportunities.

External Funding Intervention

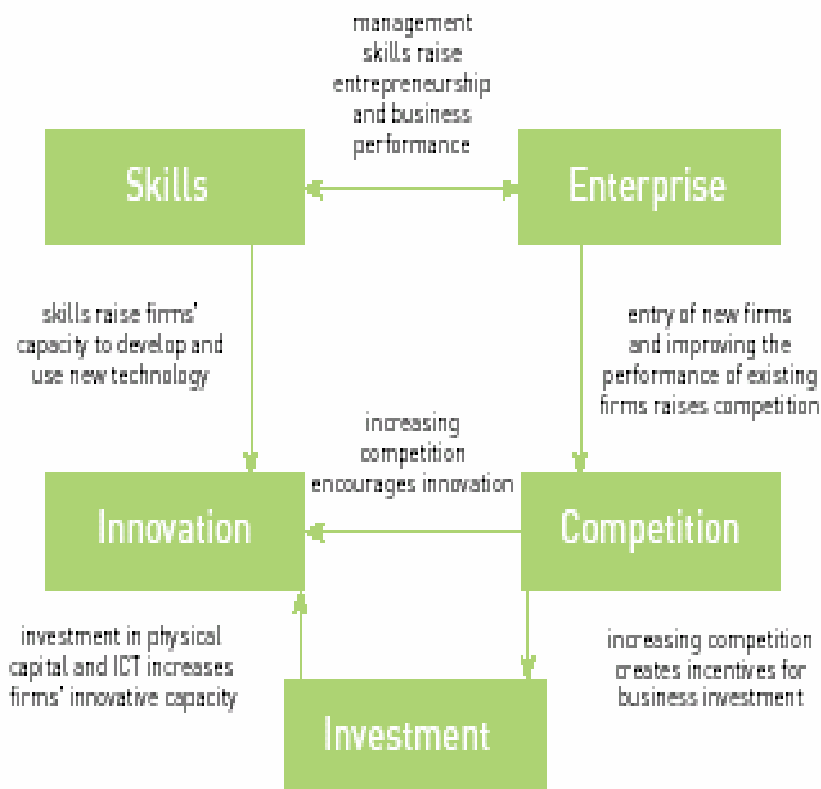
Southend has been successful in accessing Objective 2 funding to support economic development and growth and address the structural imbalance in the economy. While Objective 2 funding ceases in 2006, inclusion in the Thames Gateway provides the opportunity to secure further public-sector funding to the Borough and also lever in private-sector investment to the area.

3. ESTABLISHING THE CONDITIONS FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH

The Government has identified two key determinants of economic growth:

- **Employment** - Ensuring suitable jobs for those seeking work and encouraging those who are inactive back to work; and
- **Productivity** - Improving productivity in five key areas (or 'drivers') as outlined in the diagram on page 17.

Important Links between the drivers of productivity™



Source: *Regional Economic Strategy (EEDA 2004)*

These drivers of productivity are key to achieving a strong, prosperous local economy underpinning Southend as an attractive place to live and work.

4. IDENTIFYING THE GROWTH SECTORS

The Regional Economic Strategy (RES) highlights the importance of certain sectors in achieving and strengthening the economy of the East of England region and is defined by the RES as:

“categories of businesses in the same industrial group and described as having similar development needs. Sectors play an important role in strengthening the economy”.

Based on the existing nucleus and clusters of activity in Southend the following growth sectors have been identified which are aligned with a number of sectors identified in the RES:

- Aviation/airport and associated industries including avionics, advanced engineering and ICT;
- Health & medical industries including advanced engineering/equipment used in medical related fields;

- Business and financial services, including access to finance, legal advice and back-office functions;
- Cultural and intellectual hub and HE centre of excellence, including the university and creative and new media sectors;
- Tourism and leisure (for example seafront offer, museums, hotel, conference and casino, and long-term opportunities from Olympics).

The RES identifies that progress has been made with sector development and their importance for delivering this strategy, although work continues to develop the framework within which partners can work to achieve this growth. The Council will aim to produce the five growth sector strategies on a phased basis, with the first of those being due year end 2005/2006.

5. THE ROLE OF THE COUNCIL AND THE PUBLIC SECTOR

Both the Council and the wider public sector have a key role to play in future economic growth-related activity. We have identified a series of statements addressing where the Council and its partners wish to be in 2011 (based on the RES nominal dates for interim measurement of jobs). These can be found in the Destination Statement 2011, which is an **Addendum** to this document. A summary of the key elements of this emphasise the following areas:

- communication;
- promote a 'business-friendly' environment;
- a robust planning and transport framework;
- development of a skilled pool of labour;
- partnership working; and
- securing external funding to the Borough

6. MEASUREMENT OF SUCCESS

In order to measure the success of public sector interventions in achieving the objectives a series of measures have been identified. These are outlined as follows:

1. ***Progress toward achievement of 13,000 net jobs.***

The new planning system requires authorities to produce an Annual Monitoring Report (AMR). It sets out the authorities' progress on the extent to which the policies set out in the local development documents are being achieved. The AMR contains a number of core and local output indicators, one of which being captured is job numbers and the progress that is being made towards the target of 13 000 net additional jobs by 2021.

At present there is no standard mechanism for measuring job growth within the Borough and reliable and consistent data on year by year changes in job numbers are still being developed. However, data sources such as the Inter-Departmental Business Register published by the ONS are increasingly providing more comprehensive and useable data on jobs numbers and this is the method that has been used for this year's SAMR which could be used to track progress toward economic growth and achievement of jobs.

The East of England regional assembly and national government must be encouraged to provide guidance on how to achieve the job growth targets which have been set.

(Baseline 67% of Southend residents are economically active (source Southend AMR)).

2. % Increase in the number of business start ups surviving beyond 18 months

Business Survival Rates are derived from the Department of Trade & Industry, via the VAT registrations and de-registrations. Business survival rates are not available at a local level, but are detailed at an Essex level. Therefore, the Annual Business which utilises information from a sample of local businesses will be used along with the Barclays Bank half yearly survey⁷ that estimates business start-ups in a local authority.

(Note: further work is needed on the baseline statistic to be used for this measure).

3. Increase in local skills levels with reference to growth sectors

Southend schools out perform the national average results and information can be derived from the Department for Education & Skills information sources.

NVQ Levels

Skill levels are measured by National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ). As a general rule of thumb the equivalent of each level follow:

- NVQ Level 1 – GCSEs below grade C/GNVQ
- NVQ Level 2 – 5 GCSE passes (A*-C)
- NVQ Level 3 – 2 or more A-Levels
- NVQ Level 4 – Degree Educated
- NVQ Level 5 – Post Graduate

Information can be drawn from the Census 2001, which reveals that Southend has a much lower proportion of the 16-74 year old population qualified to NVQ level 4 and above. A diverse skills base is required to create a balanced economy, however higher skill levels are thought to help to create jobs in the knowledge economy, and would assist in improving in the quality of life for the residents of Southend.

The primary source of information relating to skills in Southend is the Learning and Skills Council Essex Southend-on-Sea Area Profile 2003. Many regional documents identify skills gaps and shortages relating to either industrial sectors or occupational categories, however, it should be noted that these might not always be replicated in Southend.

(Note: further work is needed on the baseline statistic to be used for this measure).

4. Percentage increase in industrial property stock rated as 'good' with all stock to be rated 'good' or higher by 2016

In 2005 GVA Grimley conducted a study of the industrial stock in Southend on behalf of Renaissance Southend and Southend Borough Council. The study focused on building Use Class, size, quality, age and access. A total of 32%, (417) of the 1293

⁷ Barclays Small Business – Start-ups and Closure Half One 2004

factory units (VOA 2004) in Southend were surveyed. Over half of the buildings analysed were found to be good quality 54% (227 units), a further 23% (95 units) were found to be of reasonable quality and 21% (89 units) were found to be of poor quality and 1% (6 units) mixed.

Utilising the same survey techniques we would look to see a % increase from the existing baseline of 54% as identified in the GVA Grimley Report 2005.

5. % increase in number of tourists visiting Southend for an overnight stay (282,400 – 2002) with a target to double 2002 figures by 2011

The East of England Tourist Board 2002: *Economic Impact of Tourism* was commissioned by Southend Borough Council to examine the volume and value of tourism to Southend Borough and the impact of that expenditure on the local economy in 2002. The figures were derived using the Cambridge Economic Impact Model and the research was undertaken by the East of England Tourist Board. The model utilises information from national tourism surveys and regionally based data held by the Tourist Board. It distributes regional activity as measured in those surveys to local areas using 'drivers' such as the accommodation stock and occupancy which influence the distribution of tourism activity at local level.

The report provides estimates of the volume of staying and day visit tourism to Southend Borough along with the value, including expenditure by the tourists, resultant supplier and income expenditure and the employment supported by tourism with a variety of data sources.

6. To continue to achieve a % GVA increase above that of the east of England Region

Southend's GVA⁸ increase by 51.7% in 1995-2002 was the third highest in East of England Region after Hertfordshire (68.1%) and Cambridgeshire (52.3%), compared with 44.9 % in the UK as a whole, 44.6% in England and 44.8% in East of England Region. The GVA in Southend increased by nearly £700 million, from £1.3 billion in 1995 to just over £2.0 billion in 2002

These measures should be reviewed on a biannual basis in order to ensure that progress toward targets is being made, and where possible modified with suitable interventions if appropriate.

⁸ Gross Value Added (GVA) is a measure of the products and services that are produced/delivered in an area. In essence this is an indicator of an area's productivity.

Addendum

DESTINATION STATEMENT: ECONOMIC GROWTH ASPIRATIONS TO 2011

PROCESSES & CAPABILITIES

- A range of marketing tools & materials assist in promotion
- Monthly reporting of ED enquiries & activity and job growth success
- Comprehensive project management system
- Comprehensive Client Relationship management system which is an industry standard tool for business development activities
- Websites are models of good practice and interactive tools
- Local employment generating development and economic prosperity is supported by the LDF and development briefs, masterplans and Regeneration framework
- Benchmarking of other providers' activities to ensure continuous service improvements
- Quarterly business health checks
- Clear guidelines for developers on S106 agreements and planning gain (through implementation of the LDF)
- Programme of strategic land acquisition is in its 5th year
- Skills audits conducted with all companies
- Powers of CPO utilised on a number of sites

EXTERNAL RELATIONSHIPS

- Annual Invest in Southend held and sponsored by local companies
- 200 company visits made each year
- Business Development Centre (BDC) & Business Innovation Centre (BIC) are hub for business support activity
- Strong working relationship between SBC & RSL with agreed protocols and activities
- A highly skilled pool of labour and growth sectors supported by regular meetings between educational providers, business sector and SBC
- Maintenance of strong relationships between ODPM, EEDA, TGSE, Renaissance Southend to enable access to external funding opportunities
- MIDAS information tool is utilised for research purposes
- ESF funding opportunities maximised in new structures of EU
- Regional agreements on inward investment activity

- SBC is a partner in airport development which has achieved 1 million passenger movements

QUANTITATIVE OUTCOMES

- Parcels of land assembled for redevelopment for employment use informed by IDF/ development briefs and regeneration framework
- X amount of funding secured to the Borough
- Southend has a range of hotel accommodation including x 4* hotels
- Southend is the venue for pre-Olympic training camps
- The town has a strong brand and image and is recognised nationally as a major leisure & tourism (including business tourism) destination
- Cultural hub is built and creative industries are expanding
- Industrial estates programme has delivered a range of industrial units including flexible workspace and grow-on units
- Town centre activity has been expanded to offer greater range of high street retailers and specialist niche retail premises
- Programme of infrastructure upgrade is in progress with expansion of A127 and A13, and link road to New Ranges is funded and in delivery
- Commercial seafront area development and joint venture partner secured
- Specialist clusters established in key growth sectors
- Implementation of Sustrans programme has been implemented with cycling, pedestrian networks throughout the town
- Leisure and tourism strategy in place

ORGANISATION & CULTURE

- SBC offers a 'business-friendly', corporate approach to investment and development with customer focused approach
- All enquiries are responded to in 24 hours with maintenance of effective records
- Southend Business & Tourism Partnership is a strong business forum offering informative, focused meetings
- SBC activity is informed by comprehensive research by self and partners held in county-wide information bank
- Public/private partnership approach to funding of marketing activities for the Borough funded through a joint partner approach

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations to Cabinet:

That Cabinet agrees the conclusions arising from the scrutiny:

- 5.1 That the ODPM be urged as a matter of urgency to establish a clearer definition for measuring the jobs target for the period 2001 – 2021.
- 5.2 If minded to adopt the *Economic Development Policy Statement* as set out in section 4 of the report, that the scrutiny process should undertake a period of public consultation with key stakeholders.
- 5.3 The Economic Regeneration section will review on a biannual basis the measurement of success as detailed in section 6 of the *Economic Policy Statement*, and this will be undertaken in association with the Southend Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) (carried out by the Director of Technical & Environmental Services). It will draw upon information from appropriate partners, in order to ensure that progress toward targets is being made, and where possible modified with suitable interventions if appropriate.

6. APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1	QUESTIONS POSED
APPENDIX 2	NOTES FROM WITNESS SESSIONS
APPENDIX 3	ATTENDANCE AT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE & WITNESS SESSIONS
APPENDIX 4	SUMMARY OF INFORMATION PROVIDED AT WITNESS SESSIONS
APPENDIX 5	LIST OF BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

7. CONTACT DETAILS

For further information relating to this report, or general enquiries about Scrutiny, please contact:

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QUESTIONS POSED TO WITNESSES

1. QUESTIONS FOR REGIONAL PARTNERS

ODPM/TGSE/EEDA/English Partnerships

- Achieving 13,000 net additional jobs in the local economy is a substantial challenge for the Borough - what data source should we use to measure jobs numbers?
- Is the figure of 13,000 jobs achievable?
- What policies in the region/growth area will help to stimulate the local economy?
- What sectors would you identify as potential target sectors for Southend?
- How can Southend become more sustainable and attract people to live and work in the borough?
- The Eastern side of Southend currently suffers from accessibility problems due to the linear nature of the Borough - is it recognised by your organisation that this is currently a major constraint in developing the borough, and do you believe this could be combated?
- Do we have a sufficient and appropriate amount of land to fulfil the targets?
- What impact would 13,000 jobs have on the local environment/infrastructure?
- What will be the impact of technological advancements on the town? Particularly remembering that the Southend economy is mainly service sector orientated?

Thurrock Council, Rochford District Council, Castle Point Borough Council, Basildon District Council, Essex Prosperity Forum and Essex County Council

- As partner areas we all face tough challenges in creating large numbers of jobs as a result of the East of England plan. Does your organisation believe that these targets are achievable?
- In which sectors does your authority expect to see major growth? Is this growth due to locational factors or due to national trends?
- Many people living in the Thames Gateway South Essex area commute to Greater London, how do you believe we can make our authorities more sustainable? Is this purely by making living and working in an area more attractive?
- What factors do you believe need to be changed to help this growth? (e.g. Infrastructure/Skills/Business Support)
- How will we attract major investment, and how best will we be able to create high value jobs?

2. QUESTIONS FOR BUSINESS COMMUNITY

Southend Business & Tourism Partnership, Federation of Small Businesses, SEAL, Chamber of Commerce, Business Advice Centre, Business Link 4 Essex and Renaissance Southend

- What sectors would you identify as potential target growth sectors for Southend?
- How can Southend attract more firms to locate in the area?
- How can Southend become more sustainable and attract people to live and work in the borough?
- The Eastern side of Southend currently suffers from accessibility problems due to the linear nature of the Borough. Is it recognised by your organisation that this is currently a large constraint in developing the borough and how do you believe this could be addressed?
- Do we have a sufficient and appropriate amount of land to fulfil the targets?
- What impact would 13,000 jobs have on the local environment?
- What will be the impact of technological advancements on the town, particularly remembering that the Southend economy is mainly service sector orientated?

EETB

- Do the EETB see leisure and tourism being a sector in which new jobs will be created?
- How do EETB measure new jobs created?
- What is the history of trying to measure job numbers growth?
- What national, regional and local interventions might help Southend achieve the jobs targets?
- What should the Council do to encourage job creation and how should we do it?
- Are there any issues relating to an ageing population and the seaside towns with a large number of older people moving to the area?
- What do you see as barriers to achieving job targets (i.e. skills, childcare)

London Road Traders, Southchurch Road Traders, Leigh Traders' Associations

- Southend has a high number of retailers in the town. Do you believe that retail will continue to flourish in the Borough – especially when looking at competition from multinationals and the number of people using shopping on the internet?
- Which business sectors do you believe will grow in Southend?

- Do members of your organisations find it difficult to recruit staff, and what are the main reasons for this?
- Are there any factors that you believe are constraining your member's businesses from growing in Southend? Are there any major issues that affect your group?

Southend Airport

- What local interventions might help Southend achieve the jobs targets?
- What are the expectations of partners as to how Southend should achieve economic growth?
- What should/can the council do to encourage job creation? And how should we do it?
- In what sectors will the new jobs be created?
- What skills will be required to meet the new jobs demands?
- What should be done to encourage sustainability of businesses beyond 36 months?
- What current prospects does the town have for economic/job growth?
- Is the right infrastructure in place/planned to support the jobs and dwellings growth?
- What/which social issues are likely to be barriers in achieving jobs targets in Southend (community)?
- What can be done to retain and attract businesses to the town?

KeyMed, Dedmans, Ravens and Debenhams

- What current prospects does the town have for economic/job growth (i.e. what sectors) and what measures could be taken in order to sustain and increase job numbers? What can be done to find out what will retain and attract businesses in the town?
- In order to achieve the target, on a scale of 1 – 10, what sectors would you like to see the new jobs being created?, and on a scale of 1 – 10, what is the likelihood of creating jobs within these ideal sectors? What could be done short, mid and long term to ensure we create jobs in the outlined industries?
- Do we have sufficient and appropriate land, and land uses to satisfy the jobs targets?

- Is the right infrastructure in place/planned to support the jobs and dwellings growth?
- Where will the new jobs be created, what reassurances do we have as to where developments should take place and what interventions are already in place/planned and is existing employment land sufficiently protected?
- What skills will be required to meet the new jobs demands and what role does the education sector play in terms of provision of courses to enable Southend to meet the jobs growth figures?
- What do you see as the barriers to achieve the jobs targets e.g. childcare, skills barriers etc?
- What impact will changes in technology, working patterns and e-commerce have on job growth in Southend?

Royal Bank of Scotland

- Do you feel that the finance and business services sector should be viewed as a growing or declining sector in Southend over the next 10 years?
- What sectors will drive growth in Southend?
- What will be the impact of technological advancements on the town? Particularly remembering that the Southend economy is mainly service sector orientated?
- How can Southend become more sustainable and attract people to live and work in the borough?
- What attracts major investment to an area and what can Southend do to attract major investors?
- As a major employer what problems do you find locally in recruiting staff?
- Are there any factors that your organisation believes constrain economic development in Southend?
- What are the strengths of Southend as a business location?

Southend Seafront Illuminations and Business Association

- The Seafront plays a significant role in attracting visitors to the town, do you believe tourism will continue to grow in the town?
- What steps can be taken to improve the tourism on offer in Southend?
- Do you believe that the number of people working in the seafront area is growing?

Southend Association of Voluntary Services

- How can the voluntary sector help achieve Southend's target of 13,000 new jobs by 2021?
- What social factors may inhibit Southend from achieving the jobs target and how can we help to overcome these?
- Are there any factors that your organisation believes constrain economic development in Southend?

3. QUESTIONS FOR EDUCATIONAL SECTOR

South East Essex College

- What role does the education sector play in terms of provision of courses to meet the job growth figures?
- What national/ regional and local interventions might help Southend achieve the job targets?
- What are the expectations of partners as to how Southend should achieve economic growth?
- What should/ could the council do to encourage job creations – and how should we do it?
- Are there any issues relating to adult education provision, the employment of teaching staff and young population leaving/ or after education?
- How do you see job growth fitting into the aspiration of Southend developing itself as a cultural and intellectual hub?
- What sectors would you like to see jobs created in and how likely is job creation in these sectors?
- What skills will be required to meet the new job demands? And what could be done in the short, medium and long term to create jobs in the outlined industries?
- What do you see as the barriers to achieving the jobs targets (including social issues)
- What impact will the growth in e-commerce have on job creation or decline and should we be encouraging this type of working?

LSC and University of Essex

- How do you measure new jobs created and what data will be used to measure new jobs created?
- What role does the education sector play in terms of provision of courses to meet the job growth figures?
- What national/ regional and local interventions might help Southend achieve the jobs targets? Are there any other funding programmes (pots of funding) which could be accessed.
- What are the expectation of partners as to how Southend should achieve economic growth?
- What should/ could the council do to encourage job creations – and how should we do it?
- Are there any issues relating to adult education provision, the employment of teaching staff and young population leaving/ or after education?
- How do you see jobs growth fitting into the aspiration of Southend developing itself as a cultural and intellectual hub?
- What sectors would you like to see jobs created in and how likely is job creation in these sectors?
- What skills will be required to meet the new jobs demands? And what could be done short, medium and long term to create jobs in the outlined industries?
- What do you see as the barriers to achieving the jobs targets (including social issues)
- What impact will the growth in e-commerce have on job creation or decline and should we be encouraging this type of working?

Southend Adult Community College

- How do you believe Southend can create 13,000 jobs by 2021? What sectors do you believe will be vital to this growth?
- As an adult college what are common barriers that affect mature students not being able to find work? How best could we work together to help with these problems?
- What interventions can be made at a local/regional or national level to help increase adult attainment?
- Are there any factors that your organisation believes constrain economic development in Southend?

Prospects College

- The Construction/Vocational trade industry is expected to be one that will see large growth. Do you see this as a future growth sector and do you have any projections?
- The manufacturing sector is in decline due to foreign labour costs, how can Southend attract the 'high value' jobs?
- What effect will the University and the Airport have on the Southend economy and will this make Southend a more attractive area?
- Are there any factors that your organisation believes constrain economic development in Southend?

4. QUESTIONS FOR PORTFOLIO HOLDERS

Leisure, Culture & Sport Portfolio

- Southend is a popular tourist destination, what role do you see tourism performing in terms of growing the economy and creating job growth?
- What can Southend Council do to facilitate this growth?
- What are the major barriers to growing the leisure economy?
- Leisure and tourism creates jobs across numerous employment sectors, what sectors do you believe are complemented by leisure and tourism?
- Southend is seen as a tourist destination for the summer; what would you suggest we could do to create an all year round tourism offer?
- Are there any skill gaps you are aware of in the leisure industry in Southend?

Planning and Regional Development Portfolio

- What policies in the region/growth area will help to stimulate the local economy?
- What sectors would you identify as potential target sectors for Southend?
- How can Southend become more sustainable and attract people to live and work in the borough?
- The Eastern side of Southend currently suffers from accessibility problems due to the linear nature of the Borough. Is it recognised by your organisation that this is currently a large constraint in developing the borough and how do you believe this could be combated?
- Do we have a sufficient and appropriate amount of land to fulfil the targets?
- What impact would 13,000 jobs have on the local environment?

Regeneration and Economic Development Portfolio

- What local interventions might help Southend achieve the 13,000 job growth targets?
- How certain can we be that the priorities will remain the same if we see a change of government during the period 2001-2021?
- What should the council do to encourage job creation? And how should we do it?
- The population of Southend is ageing, which is a common factor in seaside towns. Is there a risk that there will be insufficient population to meet the job growth targets?
- What skills will be required to meet the new jobs demands?
- What should be done to encourage sustainability of businesses beyond 36 months?
- What current prospects does the town have for economic/ job growth?
- Is the right infrastructure in place/ planned to support the jobs and dwellings growth?
- What do you see as the barriers to achieve the jobs targets e.g. childcare/ skills?
- Do you have difficulties in recruiting/retaining staff, if so what are the main reasons for these problems?
- What can be done to identify what will retain and attract businesses to the town?

WITNESS NOTES

**WITNESS SESSION NO.1
Held on 13TH APRIL 2005**

ATTENDEES

- (1) Mr. John Pennington, Head of Special Projects Division - Dedmans;
- (2) Mr. Mike Batty, Head of Facilities - Keymed;
- (3) Mr. Bruce Campbell and Mr. Mark Baker – Southend Airport
- (4) Mr. Mike Dowdall – East of England Tourist Board

RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS

1. QUESTIONS TO DEDMANS

Mr. John Pennington responded as follows to the questions previously submitted on behalf of the Committee:-

Question 1

What current prospects does the town have for economic/job growth (i.e. what sectors) and what measures could be taken in order to sustain and increase job numbers? What can be done to find out what will retain and attract businesses in the town?

Answer

Mr. Pennington informed the Committee that in the last couple of years getting businesses to invest in the town has improved due to positive feedback on Southend. The regeneration of Southend is highlighted with the opening of the new College and the future redevelopment of Southend Airport. The RBS development has also had a positive impact on the town and further expansion will lead to new employment opportunities.

Other growth areas are in leisure, retirement provision, health, public, construction, retail, banking finance and insurance and the arts.

Large organisations looking for investment areas need to be encouraged to look at Southend other than as a day trip destination. This perception makes business speculators, especially in Hotel investment, hesitate as the future financial costings are difficult to assess.

The Committee were informed that as a result of growth in the Construction industry in the Thames Gateway area, 1600 new intakes for courses relating to the construction training have been received by the College.

Question 2

In order to achieve the target, on a scale of 1 – 10 what sectors would you like to see the new jobs being created?, and on a scale of 1 – 10, what is the likelihood of creating jobs within these ideal sectors? What could be done short mid and long term to ensure we create jobs in the outlined industries?

Answer

The following information below shows on a scale of 1-10 where jobs could be created in the future:-

• Leisure	10
• Education	9
• Banking Finance and Insurance	8
• Public Administration and Health	7
• Construction	6
• Manufacturing	5
• The Arts (Museum, film, theatre)	4

Mr. Pennington said that training in vocational skills is essential, as employers find it very difficult to find and retain skilled workers. In the area of retirement provision there will be a need to construct and develop housing and health centres. It was also suggested that the Council need to open up discussions further with businesses in Southend to ascertain what types of future development might be required, but this will take a lot of time and hard work.

Question 3

Do we have sufficient and appropriate land, and land uses to satisfy the jobs targets?

Answer

Mr. Pennington replied that on reflection his view was “Yes, if we are wise”. There should be a review to better utilise the use of existing development and make better use of the coastline.

Regeneration of the town centre and redevelopment of already used land has helped. The town has lots of old buildings which does restrict usage, but to aid job creation mixed schemes (offices/residential) could be considered, redeveloping buildings which are run down.

Question 4

Is the right infrastructure in place/planned to support the jobs and dwellings growth?

Answer

Mr. Pennington stated that the infrastructure was in place and was improving, but a lot more support would be required to achieve the objective. If greater employment was generated in Southend with better pay, there would be less need to travel outside the area, reducing congestion on the road and rail systems. The way achieve this is by improving local skills, which in turn attracts better companies to locate to Southend.

Question 5

Where will the new jobs be created, what reassurances do we have as to where developments should take place and what interventions are already in place/planned and is existing employment land sufficiently protected?

Answer

Mr. Pennington had already answered to where he believed new jobs could be created in Question 2. However, he thought there should be continued ongoing consultation and dialogue with for example Renaissance Southend. He felt that the Council needed to do more to clarify the direction to encourage employment.

Question 6

What skills will be required to meet the new jobs demands and what role does the education sector play in terms of provision of courses to enable Southend to meet the jobs growth figures?

Answer

Mr. Pennington said that he believes that education and training is very important to the future success and to Southend's future. He informed the Committee that vocational skills start earlier in schools than previously; therefore students come into the market place with better skills and are more likely to find employment quickly. The key to Southend being able to survive in the future is diversity.

Question 7

What do you see as the barriers to achieve the jobs targets e.g. childcare, skills barriers etc?

Answer

Mr. Pennington informed the Committee that no training and low skills result in employees acceptance of low paid jobs.

Question 8

What impact will changes in technology, working patterns and e-commerce have on job growth in Southend?

Answer

Mr. Pennington said that technology has given some people the opportunity to work from home and this might eventually lead to more leisure time, but he felt that this was hard to quantify exactly what impact this has already made or will make in the future. He also pointed out that high tech good quality offices are highly prized by businesses.

Additional Points

- Mr. Pennington ended his session by saying that there are great opportunities to regenerate the town, and hopes the Council is not frightened of the scale of change required to lead to large scale growth. There is a great need to facilitate growth, investment, partnerships and the arts.
- During this evidence session it was highlighted that road transport links and the distance from the M25 are crucial to the future development of the town

and it would require brave discussions and radical steps to look at link roads etc. Leigh to Canvey

- Commercial property interest has increased in the last 5 years but mainly retail rather than manufacturing and growth will only be possible if Southend continues to market itself. However the focus of what type of businesses are wanted needs to be more forcibly marketed and clarified. If Southend sees itself as a Conference Venue then the marketing campaign must show what it has to offer over other locations available.
- Mr. Pennington informed the Committee that the Council could do more to understand business in the town better. Alison Jennings (Economic Development Manager) explained the role of the Southend Business and Tourism Partnership and Renaissance Southend. The economic regeneration team are planning to visit the top 100 businesses in Southend to find out what role the Council could play in their future development strategy.

Councillor Foster thanked Mr. Pennington for attending and providing evidence to the scrutiny.

2 QUESTIONS TO KEYMED

Mr. Mike Batty responded as follows to the questions previously submitted on behalf of the Committee:-

Question 1

What current prospects does the town have for economic/job growth (i.e. what sectors) and what measures could be taken in order to sustain and increase job numbers? What can be done to find out what will retain and attract businesses in the town?

Answer

Mr. Batty informed the Committee that the majority of the working population of c.250,000 in the wider general area, travel to office work in/near London and therefore many current local businesses only serve these commuters - retail, home improvements, domestic services, builders, car sales & service, leisure etc and most are small local businesses with limited likelihood of significant growth.

Mr. Batty continued by saying that outside of the area, Southend does not have the image to attract major business opportunities and even businesses that visit the area may conclude it is really a "day tripper - seaside town" within commuting distance of London. Compare the business image of Cambridge, Peterborough, Reading or Swindon.

Question 2

In order to achieve the target, on a scale of 1 – 10 what sectors would you like to see the new jobs being created?, and on a scale of 1 – 10, what is the likelihood of creating jobs within these ideal sectors? What could be done short mid and long term to ensure we create jobs in the outlined industries?

Answer

Mr. Batty informed the Committee that whilst the larger and more established local companies may add say 2,000 staff over the next 15 years, to achieve an increase of 13,000 jobs will require 20 - 40 businesses which have significant numbers of staff and are larger than the majority of companies currently in the area.

He told the Committee that being on a relative "peninsula", with no routes to the South, North and East of the area, Southend has almost no unique benefits to offer national/international manufacturing or distribution business - hence there are very few already - KeyMed, MK, Albon Engineering, Ipeco.

He felt that the new airport is likely to attract aerospace service companies, though the airport and road developments will have little effect in attracting other significant companies in the distribution/manufacturing sectors.

Mr. Batty said attracting significant office-based businesses (finance, insurance, etc - like RBS, FDS etc), partly based on commercial property prices being much lower than in/near London, would provide jobs for those already living in the area but currently travelling to London. To add 13,000 extra local jobs the town only needs to attract around 6% of those already commuting to London. Once it is known these larger employers are committed new small support service companies and extra jobs will follow in response - recruitment, training, I.T. support, communications, hotels etc.

Mr. Batty informed the Committee that to persuade business to move their total London offices to SE Essex would prove difficult, as many Directors, Managers and staff will live to the South, West or North of London and relocation or commuting would be unattractive. Selected parts of businesses could therefore move to SE Essex enabling their companies to maintain a London base in smaller, less expensive offices, or new teams/groups/business could be formed in SE Essex.

Question 3

Do we have sufficient and appropriate land, and land uses to satisfy the jobs targets?

Answer

Mr. Batty informed the Committee that due to the sea, the Thames and surrounding rivers, the Southend area has a finite land resource with only limited parcels available for development and in the last 20 years much of this has been used for housing commuters.

He felt that travel within the local area is difficult due to bottlenecks arising from bridges over railway lines, intervening rivers and roads like London Road, unsuitable for today's heavier traffic. Public transport serving business/industrial areas is also poor.

Mr. Batty continued by saying that there are worthwhile parcels of land (who owns them?) near RBS / Tesco, Fossetts Farm and 256 acres on the left just past Bournes Green. As the largest developments of new housing tend to be on the

Shoebury side, developments at Fossetts Farm or near Bournes Green would overcome the need for the additional local staff travelling too far in the area.

Question 4

Is the right infrastructure in place/planned to support the jobs and dwellings growth?

Answer

Mr. Batty informed the Committee that house prices in the Southend area are lower than in many other locations an hour from London, which given jobs without the time and cost of daily commuting, will encourage other people to the area and there are good and still improving leisure facilities. However, many staff still find difficulty in getting a foot on the housing ladder.

He told the Committee that as a significant part of the area houses commuters, much of the general support infrastructure is already in place and more will follow as large companies commit to the area but there is currently inadequate provision of good standard hotels and childcare (daily pre-school, after school and holiday clubs).

Question 5

Where will the new jobs be created, what reassurances do we have as to where developments should take place and what interventions are already in place/planned and is existing employment land sufficiently protected?

Answer

The response to this question has been covered in Question 2.

Question 6

What skills will be required to meet the new jobs demands and what role does the education sector play in terms of provision of courses to enable Southend to meet the jobs growth figures?

Answer

Mr. Batty informed the Committee that there were inadequate basic standards in English (spelling & grammar) and mathematics amongst school leavers. We still need good I.T., communication, people and life skills from school and college leavers.

Question 7

What do you see as the barriers to achieve the jobs targets e.g. childcare, skills barriers etc?

Answer

The response to this question has been covered in Questions 4 and 6.

Question 8

What impact will changes in technology, working patterns and e-commerce have on job growth in Southend?

Answer

Mr. Batty stated that developments in technology have already aided businesses with fast communication and the ability to work away from the office.

Additional Points

- Mr. Batty said there was a need for good hotel accommodation and used his company as an example to this. Keymed approximately 6 times a year have 100 people stay for 3 days and find it difficult to provide the expected facilities. Keymed's international visitors commute from London. He felt that the lack of good quality hotels should be looked at by the Council.
- It was also highlighted that Southend's industrial estates stock is poor, mainly due to many tenants being attracted by cheap prices and the lack of investment by tenants and owners; this in turn brings down the quality of the area.

The Chairman, Councillor Foster thanked Mr. Batty for attending and providing evidence to the scrutiny.

3. QUESTIONS FOR SOUTHEND AIRPORT

Mr. Bruce Campbell and Mr. Mark Baker briefly outlined the plans for the Airport, set out in the Master Plan which sets out how it sees itself growing – 2030 with an increase of 2m passengers over that time and responded as follows to the questions previously submitted on behalf of the Committee:-

Question 1

What local interventions might help Southend achieve the jobs targets?

Answer

Mr. Campbell informed the Committee that training and education is important for the future as the airport needs specific job requirements e.g. engineering. Attracting jobs also requires good housing stock and facilities. Southend should look at itself as a part of a link to Europe.

Question 2

What are the expectations of partners as to how Southend should achieve economic growth?

Answer

Mr. Campbell stated that he saw the airport as having a catalytic role in achieving economic growth. There could be up to 600 new job opportunities in the future due to the growth of the airport. There will be 2,000 direct jobs to airport, as well as there being 'indirect' growth through retail, cleaning and construction.

Question 3

What should/can the council do to encourage job creation? And how should we do it?

Answer

Mr. Campbell suggested that the Council work closely with the College/University to make sure that the specialised skills such as engineering courses could be available; this in turn would hopefully encourage businesses to come to Southend knowing that the necessary work force could be found.

Question 4

In what sectors will the new jobs be created?

Answer

Mr. Campbell felt that new jobs could be created in the construction, retail, advertising and cleaning areas, and in the professional engineering section through growth of the airport.

Question 5

What skills will be required to meet the new jobs demands?

Answer

Mr. Campbell informed the Committee that basic level skills would be needed to fill positions in the semi-skilled areas, but that there was also a need for specialist in-house training in areas such as engineering. He stated that is also import to work closely with the College/University.

Question 6

What current prospects does the town have for economic/job growth?

Answer

Mr. Campbell informed the Committee that the Council should look at what local requirements are needed by businesses regarding access into Europe. It needs to establish where our business partners in Southend and Europe are and to develop links with other airports. Once these links are established this in turn could lead to the development of international travel and route development.

Question 7

Is the right infrastructure in place/planned to support the jobs and dwellings growth?

Answer

Mr. Campbell informed the Committee that when the airport is fully functional he hoped that local residents and businesses would use it rather travel to Gatwick etc. due to cheaper airport handling services and less air congestion, this would result in a reduction in the amount of traffic on local access routes.

Question 8

What/which social issues are likely to be barriers in achieving jobs targets in Southend (community).

Answer

Mr. Campbell informed the Committee that with regard to the development of the airport is subject to several issues in the future. With regard to a railway link consent is required from Network Railway for a station to be placed at the airport, this requires seeking the approval of 12 licences and it was suggested that the

Council could help with the beaurocracy. Funding is required for the studies required and hopefully Thames Gateway and Renaissance Southend will come to their aid. The estimated costs for establishing a rail link at the airport is £23 million, of which £4 million would be for buildings and £6.5 million for fees and associated costs.

Mr. Campbell invited the Council to attend further discussions involving the use of land as car parking around the proposed rail station, this also required funding streams and he would welcome input on this.

Question 10

What can be done to retain and attract businesses to the town?

Answer

Mr. Campbell informed the Committee that the Council needs to develop its leisure industry which will lead to opening up opportunities from other associated areas. He said that developing that town as a leisure destination is key. Relationship with university – foreign student market to be tapped.

Additional Points

- It was once again confirmed that better hotel provision was an essential part of the economic development of Southend in the future.

The Chairman, Councillor Foster thanked Mr. Batty for attending and providing evidence to the scrutiny.

4. QUESTIONS FOR EAST OF ENGLAND TOURIST BOARD

Mr. Dowdall responded as follows to the questions previously submitted on behalf of the Committee:-

Question 1

Do the EETB see leisure and tourism being a sector in which new jobs will be created?

Answer

Mr. Dowdall informed the Committee that two reports dealt with this issue. According to "The Locum (EEDA funded) Regional Tourism Strategy inferred that 1:4 of all new jobs in the region and 185,000 where employed in the industry. The Sheffield Hallam University report of January 2004 "The Seaside Economy", showed that jobs in tourism were still being sustained in the industry in resorts across the United Kingdom.

Question 2

How do EETB measure new jobs created?

Answer

Mr. Dowdall told the Committee that this is very difficult as national data published by the National Statistics Office are not helpful. He referred to an EETB volume

and value study which gave their estimate for Southend – this report has been presented to the Council.

Question 3

What is the history of trying to measure job numbers growth?

Answer

Mr. Dowdall stated that these are only estimated by the volume of visitors and the value of spending.

Question 4

What national, region and local interventions might help Southend achieve the jobs targets?

Answer

Mr. Dowdall informed the Committee that the Council needs to improve the image of the leisure and tourism industry, including recruitment, as these particular jobs are traditionally low paid and usually only seasonal, however, the reality was changing and many jobs are now better paid and permanent.

Mr. Dowdall highlighted three areas that could be looked at:-

- **Casinos** – but unfortunately due to a recent Government decision this development may not be possible;
- **Skills Development** – EEDA undertook a Skills Audit – and the findings would need to be addressed;
- **Quality in Services** – the provision of good quality hotel provision is essential for business/tourism development.

He continued by saying that business and tourism are both growth areas, and if developments are made to improve the image of Southend market forces will drive a developer to look at the viability of opening a hotel.

Question 5

What should the Council do to encourage job creation and how should we do it?

Answer

Mr. Dowdall told the Committee that the nature of tourism has changed, but Southend has been able to maintain its level of day visitors, therefore Southend must learn to diversify in order to maintain and attract new visitors.

Mr. Dowdall continued by saying that local authorities are leading players in maintaining the local area to get new investment. The Council need to look at the quality of accommodation and what type of attractions are available to the visitor, so they leave with a memorable experience. (Mr. Dowdall referred to 'destination management'). There is a need to invest and encourage business in skills development and management training in the tourism industry especially, as this aids business growth. Business links need to be used to their fullest potential, the Economic Development Team must be alert to all funding opportunities e.g. Heritage and Partnership Funding, and push hard to get through the various funding systems.

Question 6

Are there any issues relating to an ageing population and the seaside towns with a large number of older people moving to the area?

Answer

Mr. Dowdall informed the Committee that there was difficulty in creating sufficient jobs for the population, retirees do come with disposable income and this should not be looked at as a negative, but as a positive so that their needs could be capitalised upon. He suggested the Council look at the redevelopment of Great Yarmouth, Brighton and Bournemouth which have similar profiles to Southend.

Question 7

What do you see as barriers to achieving job targets (i.e. skills, childcare)?

Answer

Mr. Dowdall informed the Committee that barriers would be the “maintenance of public realm” e.g. public conveniences, road and train links as well as street cleansing. The local authority needs to be on “the ball” in terms of inward investment.

Additional Points

- Mr. Dowdall continued by saying that with regard to the image there was no quick fix regarding changing people’s traditional perceptions of a seaside town.
- Mr. Dowdall was asked if there was any potential in forming a joint venture with another authority on the Estuary to maybe create an “Estuary Experience”. Whilst he felt this was a good idea, due to other regional developments it would be difficult to find investors. Whilst a Marina has been proposed on several occasions, it is still an area of possibility for investment.
- It was also suggested that a change of structure for the trip from the station to the beach could also lift the profile of the area. The vista and signage have greatly improved, but there is still need to incorporate areas outside of the main High Street.

The Chairman, Councillor Foster thanked Mr. Dowdall for attending and providing evidence to the scrutiny.

WITNESS SESSION NO.2

Held on 15th April 2005

ATTENDEES

- (1) Councillor David Garston – Portfolio Holder;
- (2) Janice Logie, Director of Skills & Comm Learning – Learning & Skills Council (LSC);
- (3) Linda Jones – University of Essex

RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS

1. QUESTIONS TO COUNCILLOR DAVID GARSTON

Councillor Garston responded as follows to the questions previously submitted on behalf of the Committee:-

Question 1

What local interventions might help Southend achieve the 13000 job growth targets?

Answer

- **Land Use** - The Council needs to focus on the land use issues in the Borough and make sure land is being used efficiently and in a sustainable way. This may require tough measures such as CPOs and planning gains (S.106s) – the Council can be seen to say no to developments that are wrong for the borough
- **Business Support** - Make sure support for SMEs is available and increases the business support providers' profile to the business community.
- **Entrepreneurs** - Southend needs to capture the entrepreneurial spirit that is present in the borough and capitalise on this by providing work spaces that accommodate the needs. Southend is anecdotally known for businesses out growing the borough, this trend must be reversed.
- **Targeted Sectors** -The Council and partners need to identify growth sectors that will flourish in Southend, and then perform targeted marketing strategy to attract this type of inward investment.
- **Retention** - Business retention is an issue in the Borough, there needs to be a more hands-on approach with businesses in the Borough
- **Skills** - Up-skilling/re-skilling residents of Southend – educational partners and community projects in partnership with the Council need to focus on projects that can help the unemployed and unemployable back to work. Educational enhancement needs to happen from schools through to adult education. The new College and University developments are a major opportunities to develop skills.
- **Sustainable planning** - The Council planning and transportation framework needs encourage and support sustainable growth.

The Committee was informed that there was discussion between the Council and local businesses and the Regeneration team do help smaller businesses by finding business support providers, it appeared that discussion with larger concerns only happened when they had a problem.

The Regeneration Team are going to be in contact with the top 100 employers in the town, to find out what aid they may require. "Business Link 4 Essex" will be carrying out a survey regarding the health of the economy, also looking at the best way to contact these businesses directly, this will be an ongoing project, and should be looked at as a Corporate exercise.

The Committee asked Councillor Garston whether the business world is organised. He thought not, but improvement was shown when business and tourism work together.

Councillor Garston stated that Southend does lose out on many issues due to road links to the M25 corridor and the run down industrial estates which are in need of regeneration to encourage new businesses to locate here. The Airport development will aid with new access points by air.

The Committee asked Councillor Garston how businesses could be contacted, he responded by stating that the small business in the area are very important to the Borough with approximately 8,000 employees. The Council needs to look at helping them maintain their business, rather than always looking at the large businesses. Contact can be made via the London Road, Leigh, Southchurch and York Road Traders Associations. He continued by saying that the Southend Business and Tourism Partnership should invite smaller businesses in to discuss future developments, and funding is available from Business Link in Essex for businesses with up to 250 employees. The Council cannot deal with the problems on its own and must use the Partnerships that are available.

Question 2

How certain can we be that that priorities will remain the same if we see a change of government during the period 2001-2021?

Answer

Councillor Garston mentioned that the Thames Gateway was created by a Conservative Administration and continued by this Labour government. Winning the Olympic bid would see investment continue in the Thames Gateway. He continued by stating that it is imperative that the Council must try to get as much as possible out of the Thames Gateway. It is also clear that regeneration is different from development.

Question 3

What should the council do to encourage job creation? And how should we do it?

Answer

Councillor Garston informed the Committee that the Council had to encourage businesses to be more successful. The 'Seedbed Centre' is a good example of job creation, it encourages small businesses to develop then move on, but this is often difficult due to a lack of new developments or industrial land. The town needs to be more business friendly, as employers find it difficult to attract a skilled workforce, due to lack of skills, lower wages but high housing costs. Need to ensure students are skilled. If the right kind of jobs were available, people might return to local employment to obtain a better quality of life, but the town would need to diversify

with the variety of jobs and professions available, as well as looking at the conflict of interest between job creation and land usage.

Question 4

The population of Southend is ageing, which is a common factor in seaside towns. Is there a risk that there will be insufficient population to meet the job growth targets?

Answer

Councillor Garston stated that Southend does have a large retired community, and this group of people are an asset to the town but we do need to encourage working age people to live and work in Southend and reduce reliance on outward commuting – hence the higher target of 13,000 jobs but only 6,000 new homes.

- **Attracting residents through jobs** - If Southend attracts a more diverse set of employers then it is likely that a broader pool of employees will be attracted locally to fill these jobs. Housing growth will also contribute to this.
- **University** – It is envisaged that the University will also contribute to a change in the demographic profile of the borough, due to an increased ‘student’ population, hopefully leading the graduate retention and higher value professions in the town.

Councillor Garston informed the Committee that there are a lot of older people who choose to continue work passed retirement age and have shown employers that they are reliable and come with a wealth of experience, the down side of this is that youngsters do not want to join an ageing workforce.

Question 5

What skills will be required to meet the new jobs demands?

Answer

- **Vocational Skills** - Currently noted that there is a shortage in vocational skills, the relocation and expansion of the Prospects College will also be a key driver in Southend. Children need to be encouraged to enter trade and apprenticeships
- **Graduate retention** – Southend has a lower proportion of NVQ level 4 qualified people than surrounding areas, retaining graduates after studies is essential.

Question 6

What should be done to encourage sustainability of businesses beyond 36 months?

Answer

- **Premises** - Quality premises for small/new businesses
- **Location** - Encourage businesses to develop in the correct location (i.e.- distribution need good transport links)
- **Business Support** - Promotion of business support services
- **Knowledge** – improve the knowledge of local businesses - leading to tailor-made solutions for helping failing businesses

Question 7

What current prospects does the town have for economic/ job growth?

Answer

Councillor Garston said that he believed that Southend has the following strengths:-

- People
- University
- Airport
- Seafront/Leisure facilities
- Major Retail Centre
- Tourism
- Saxon King

Councillor Garston continued by saying that the town should not look back, but with technology there are less jobs available. Whilst Southend is not a manufacturing town, but there are areas for small manufacturers to expand in aero nautical engineering, with links to the University providing skilled labour. There could also be scope with the expansion of the hospital to a teaching one. The Thames Gateway have done a study of South Essex projecting job growth, this could help with finding where the jobs are.

Question 8

Is the right infrastructure in place/ planned to support the jobs and dwellings growth?

Answer

Accessibility is a crucial issue for urban spaces on peninsulas –

- need to stress the need for improvements to the entire length A127/A13
- Southend Outer Access
- Improvements to transport interchanges
- A multi-modal Lower Thames Crossing
- New Ranges
- Use of the river for transport.
- Green Transport – and greater use of more sustainable transport forms.
- Partnership working with national, regional and neighbouring authorities

Question 9

What do you see as the barriers to achieve the jobs targets (e.g. childcare/ skills?)

Answer

- **Local Strategic Partnership** – The LSP will drive the social agenda through the ‘Southend Together’ document
- **Housing** – need to increase the amount of affordable housing for key workers and first time buyers
- **Unemployment** – Bringing people back into the workplace, by instilling confidence and new skills to make them more attractive to the employers.
- **Deprived communities** – enterprise needs to be encouraged to increase prosperity in areas of disadvantage

- **Education** – make sure that the highest level of education is delivered in Southend
- **Childcare** – availability of child care for single parents

Additional Points

- Question to consider – is Southend a seaside town, or a town by the sea.
- It was brought to the attention of the Committee that the Pier does not seem to be included in the economic or job growth of the town
- It was suggested that a flyer recommending businesses to the town detailing the infrastructure, good housing and schools highlighting that Southend will be a University Town (stress the education and cultural hub).
- The East of England Development Agency state that marketing funding is crucial and funding should be found from all available sources.
- Mention made of the need to improve the Southend Borough Council website

The Chairman, Councillor Foster thanked Councillor Garston for attending and providing evidence to the scrutiny.

2 QUESTIONS TO LEARNING AND SKILLS COUNCIL

Janice Logie firstly gave an overview of the LSC. It is a national organisation with 47 offices. The Essex office covers Southend, Thurrock and Essex. The LSC deals with all post-16 education (except HE sector). Locally the LSC funds 6th form education, SEEC, Adult Community College and Prospects College, for vocational training. Ms. Logie responded as follows to the questions previously submitted on behalf of the Committee:-

Question 1

How do you measure new jobs created and what data will be used to measure new jobs created?

Answer

Ms. Logie informed the Committee that they do not measure job creation. The LCS has been set up to find out (take intelligence) what new businesses will require in the future.

Question 2

What role does the education sector play in terms of provision of courses to meet the job growth figures?

Answer

Ms. Logie informed the Committee that the LSC's role is to plan and fund training and learning. The LSC negotiates funding priorities and targets with the providers in Southend. Ms. Logie referred to "employability skills" and meeting the needs of local businesses.

In terms of working with employers it is possible to provide funding for training up to Level 2 in English/Maths through the national employer training pilot ***Profit from Learning***.

Ms. Logie informed the Committee that Business Links Markets was a pilot scheme with small businesses who employ up to 250 employees, but training is not a high priority. By using a brokerage model and training providers we will work with employers at a time to suite business needs e.g. Carers met in middle of night, as this was the only time available to them for study.

Question 3

What national/ regional and local interventions might help Southend achieve the jobs targets? Are there any other funding programmes (pots of funding) which could be accessed?

Answer

Ms. Logie informed the Committee that the Regional Development Agency has an interest for skills in Southend, and has focussed on engineering in the past. To achieve the job targets the Council must recognise that there is a need to raise the skills base from Level 1 through to Degree level, use the College to its fullest potential in achieving this improvement and in the future the University for more specialised training.

Question 4

Are there any issues relating to adult education provision, the employment of teaching staff and young population leaving/ or after education?

Answer

Ms. Logie stated that provision for 16-18 year olds to obtain the education they need, encourage more in this age group to continue with their education at 6th form or by going to College. With regard to careers advice Connexions give guidance to students in schools, for those attending College advice is available on site.

Question 5

How do you see jobs growth fitting into the aspiration of Southend developing itself as a cultural and intellectual hub?

Answer

Ms. Logie informed the Committee that Southend has a lot of office staff, due to various Call Centres located in or around Southend, which means its profile is very narrow. The College must decide what type of employer they are trying to encourage, and once decided the Learning Skills Council could work with the Council to put in place a programme to provide the necessary skilled labour force. Up-skilling is a cultural problem therefore will be a long term change. She felt for example there could be a 'skills escalator' in the health sector.

Question 6

What do you see as the barriers to achieving the jobs targets (including social issues?)

Answer

Ms. Logie informed the Committee that the local transport system and its skills base could be major barriers against achieving the job targets required.

Question 7

What impact will the growth in e-commerce have on job creation or decline and should we be encouraging this type of working?

Answer

Ms. Logie informed the Committee that she had no views on e-commerce as does not know enough on this issue. In conclusion Ms. Logie confirmed that the LSC is keen to be involved with local businesses if there are skills issues.

The Chairman, Councillor Foster thanked Ms. Logie for attending and providing evidence to the scrutiny.

3. QUESTIONS FOR UNIVERSITY OF ESSEX

Linda Jones responded as follows to the questions previously submitted on behalf of the Committee:-

Question 1

How do you measure new jobs created and what data will be used to measure new jobs created?

Answer

Ms. Jones informed the Committee that there were many projects undertaken which record new jobs, the data is capture by recording that a new job has been achieved, where the employee comes from, age, ethnic background, then see to clearly recognize whether the job was new, transferred, external, internal or from unemployment.

Question 2

What role does the education sector play in terms of provision of courses to meet the job growth figures?

Answer

Ms. Jones stated that the University recognises that they are not geared up for businesses and they would like to provide focused and relevant courses for businesses and their employees. Business Champions Network is helping to bring people together to support integrated provision to aid business growth.

Question 3

What are the expectations of partners as to how Southend should achieve economic growth?

Answer

Ms. Jones informed the Committee that the image of Southend needs to change to attract new money. At present the image is of a yobbish, day trip culture, a town that looks rundown and tired, together with the a low skills basic and cultural image of 'Essex Girls'

Question 4

Are there any issues relating to adult education provision, the employment of teaching staff and young population leaving/ or after education?

Answer

Ms. Jones informed the Committee that the University will be more vocational based rather than theoretical due to its link with the College. There is also an emerging trend that the new generation of students does not want to stay in Halls, but at home, with the majority of students coming from a 10 mile radius, therefore the range of courses would reflect this. The University will have provision to secure jobs locally with its teaching staff and hopefully bringing students in from outside of the Borough and with the future development of the airport possibly drawing in students from Europe.

Ms. Jones continued by saying that the development of a Business Training Centre at The Palace Hotel will hopefully show Southend in a different light and encourage businesses to invest in the town. She also mentioned the 30 unit business centre located on the new campus site.

Ms. Jones stated that Southend has good hospital facilities and secondary care, as well as good secondary schools, which does help with attracting future employees.

Question 5

How do you see jobs growth fitting into the aspiration of Southend developing itself as a cultural and intellectual hub?

Answer

Ms. Jones hoped that the Council would work closely with the University in this area. There are areas of development in sports, heritage (Saxon King) and leisure which will aid Southend achieving its jobs target. She mentioned that the acting school will be setting up a second campus here in the future hopefully developing a street culture, a 'covent garden' atmosphere for the town.

Question 6

What sectors would we you like to see jobs created in and how likely is job creation in these sectors?

Answer

Ms. Jones informed the Committee that the following areas are the most likely to create jobs in the future:-

- Finance
- Call Centres
- Specialist Engineering
- Service/Maintenance
- Tourism and it related partnerships

Ms. Jones continued by saying that as people are attached to the town the development of hotels is likely. Hoteliers are changing their options of the town, but this must be sustained for the future.

Question 7

What skills will be required to meet the new jobs demands? And what could be done short, medium and long term to create jobs in the outlined industries?

Answer

Ms. Jones informed the Committee that there should be high priority on people achieving up to level 3 skills to meet future demands. There is a Business Weekend College funded by the Learning Skills Council which offers up to Level 2. In the future, when phase 2 of the Business Centre opens, it is hope to provide up to a Masters Degree, as well as professional credit if businesses require this.

Additional Points

- The Committee were informed that the University was situated in Southend in part due to the commitment of Ms. Jones. It was based on a project to local the College in a state of the art building and high quality environment. Ms. Jones remembered Southend as being a lively town, where the people were genuine and loyal to Southend with a desire to be better. There were reasonably good rail/road links and generally good grammar schools, all of which goes to aid in businesses coming to the area.
- It was also felt that the area of marketing Southend should be looked at more closely, with suggestions that consideration might be given to moving from leisure to the corporate care of the organisation. It was also suggested that a Marketing Company might also be approached for input.

The Chairman, Councillor Foster thanked Ms. Jones for attending and providing evidence to the scrutiny.

WITNESS SESSION NO.3

Held on 9th May 2005

ATTENDEES

- (1) Mr. A Pollock – Thames Gateway South Essex Partnership
- (2) Sue Coole – South East Essex College (SEEC)
- (3) Mr. Stuart Greengrass – Renaissance Southend
- (4) Councillor A North – Portfolio Holder and John Dallaway – Director of Leisure, Culture and Amenity Services

RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS

1. QUESTIONS TO THAMES GATEWAY SOUTH ESSEX PARTNERSHIP

Mr. Pollock explained that the TGSE was formed in 2001 as a sub regional partnership and is funded by the 6 local authorities, EEDA, BL4E and LSC. The organisation works closely with the ODPM and other government departments. Mr. Pollock responded as follows to the questions previously submitted on behalf of the Committee:-

Question 1

Achieving 13,000 net additional jobs in the local economy is a substantial challenge for the Borough, what data source should we use to measure jobs numbers?

Answer

Mr. Pollock informed the Committee of the following ways in which various agencies use data to measure job numbers:-

Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM)/East of England Development Agency (EEDA)

Delivery Unit – managing the delivery of the Sustainable Communities programme. As part of their monitoring they will collect figures relating to job creation. Job creation figures will also be collected through the Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) as part of their Output counting to Department of Trade and Industry (DTI). There needs to be a system in place to safeguard against double counting and to pick up on the indirect job creation.

Thames Gateway South Essex/MIDAS

There is also potential to use MIDAS as a tool for monitoring job numbers. It will have access to a wide range of data sources and in particular those sources that have been set up to count jobs creation.

Essex MIDAS is a platform by which partners will be able to share contact and knowledge information and thus gather and create the intelligence to help Essex leaders make informed decisions.

An ambition of Essex MIDAS Phase 4 is to integrate aspects of the systems. of Business Link 4 Essex (BL4E), ExDRA and TGSE into MIDAS properly and beneficially. The job of integrating ExDRA and Business Link is already underway.

Other sources

Other sources will be Office of National Statistics' Annual Business Inquiry, Annual Labour Force Survey, Census data and EERA's monitoring of the East of England Plan.

There is a recognised need for improved intelligence and a much more robust evidential base. TGSE has commissioned a number of studies to address this situation. The key study relevant to this Scrutiny Committee is the KPMG Economic Baseline Study, which is currently in draft form, but will report in July to the full TGSE Board.

Mr. Pollock concluded by adding that the Census was one of the most accurate measurements for jobs in the area.

Question 2

Is the figure of 13,000 jobs achievable?

Answer

Mr. Pollock provided the Committee with the following information on how these jobs could be achieved:-

KPMG Economic Base Line Study (draft)

The East of England Plan sets out an ambitious "plan-led" growth scenario with a target of 55,000 net jobs by 2021. The job target for Southend of 13,000 forms part of this wider target.

The KPMG Economic Baseline Study was commissioned to examine the likelihood of the "Planned-led Growth" scenario being achieved and considers it against three other trend based employment scenarios.

As anticipated, the study has shown that the target figure is ambitious and would require a 21% net increase in jobs between 2002 and 2021. It states that a profound change will need to take place in the region if this figure is to be achieved.

The Study forecasts the following changes in the TGSE's economy:

- there will be a decrease in: agriculture, hunting, forestry and fishing; mining, manufacturing and utilities; and
- there will be an increase in transport, storage and communications (the planned growth is almost twice that of the other scenario forecasts for this sector); real estate, renting and business activities; in education; and in health and social work.

The study recommends a set of interventions based on analysis of economic data, a property stock survey and consultation with a range of stakeholders (these are set out in draft and will be developed as the study progresses).

Intervention measures fall into 5 broad categories:

- Improving competitiveness
- Property based activity
- Infrastructure changes
- Operational/strategic interventions
- Raising TGSE profile

Recommendations will build on the Thames Gateway South Essex Vision to develop Southend as an intellectual and cultural hub and Higher Education Centre of Excellence. This will be developed through Southend's local regeneration framework and will be supported by a programme of intervention measures as cited above.

The study assumes Southend will keep its existing employment base, but recognises that land availability will be important.

Emerging issues

There is a recognised need for a more strategic and focused approach to inward investment. The recent Ancer SPA study focuses on capacity issues and the delivery of jobs through inward investment.

The culture/leisure/sport/heritage and tourism sectors are being considered for growth potential. (Continuum – are doing a Sports Scoping Study to assess this opportunity).

There is a need to identify the skills sets and develop a plan with HE/FE partners through the TGSE Education and Skills Forum.

TGSE is working with key partners such as Business Link and EEDA to ensure that a programme of intervention is successfully delivered.

Further bespoke research might be needed to find out for example why a high percentage of start-up businesses are failing.

Key drivers identified in KPMG Study

A number of drivers are emerging from the KPMG study, which will influence the success of future intervention programmes:

- Developing higher skilled jobs
- Dynamics of graduate labour market / retention of graduates
- London Gateway proposals at Shell Haven
- Infrastructure provision e.g. Lower Thames Crossing will help stimulate growth and job creation
- Capturing a percentage of the identified “out commuting”

- More females entering the job market – need to develop training to meet this trend
- Industrial Estates improvements – programme being developed in 2005/06 via EEDA / TGSE and LDVs.
- Provision of incubator space needs to be included in the above
- Global economy – tailored business support
- Airport expansion – Southend (see Master Plan)
- Enterprise culture, including social enterprise under lic
- Potential implications of Olympic Bid (London or Paris)
- Future of seaside economies (Research by Sheffield Hallam University)
- Growth in casinos
- Establishment of URC

Mr. Pollock responded to questions about how to measure the target set and in what areas had growth potential.

He added that ODPM offers small development grants to Local Authority Planning Departments to support delivery and promote performance.

The spatial distribution of the proposed new jobs within the town, as set out in the Technical Paper to the East of England Plan are as follows:-

- Town Centre 6,500
- Shoeburyness 3,000
- Other areas 2,500
- General 1,000

Approximately half of the jobs will come from new growth, some from the “lowering of people commuting” and through reduction in unemployment.

The Education and Skills Forum can aid with getting more funding for courses and facilities to create higher skilled jobs. With regard to leisure jobs, he felt that there is a need for diversification.

Question 3

What policies in the region/growth area will help to stimulate the local economy?

Answer

Mr. Pollock informed the Committee of the various Agencies which have policies which could help the local economy, these are detailed below:-

ODPM

ODPM's Sustainable Community Plan / programme of investment with a key focus on Growth Areas. It refers to the need to apply a sequential approach to development in Thames Gateway and promotes Southend as a Zone of Change. ODPM recently launched: *Sustainable Communities: Delivering the Thames Gateway*, which sets out how the Thames Gateway, labeled as the largest regeneration scheme in Western Europe is benefiting from unprecedented investment - including:

- £1 billion for transport;
- £26m for new parks and woodland;
- £60 million to improve health services; and
- £850 million to improve quality of life, provide 120,000 new homes and create around 180,000 new jobs.

Regional Spatial Strategy (East of England Plan)

The draft East of England Plan sets out the plan led growth in the Thames Gateway and is supported by TGSE's Technical Background Paper. Following a period of consultation, a Public Examination will take place in September 2005. The key policy imperative for the sub-region is to achieve regeneration through jobs-led growth to secure higher levels of local economic performance and employment in order to achieve a more sustainable balance of local jobs and workers.

EEDA Regional Economic Strategy (RES)

RES Goals

1. Skill base that can support a world-class community
2. Growing competitiveness, productivity and entrepreneurship
3. Global leadership in developing and realising innovation in science, tech & research
4. High quality places to live, work and visit
5. Social inclusion and broad participation in the regional economy
6. International gateways and national & regional transport corridors
7. A leading information society
8. An exemplar for the efficient use of resources

TGSE Visions and Strategic Objectives

This document produced by the Thames Gateway South Essex Partnership sets out a vision for the future for Thames Gateway South Essex. It is an opportunity for driving forward regeneration and achieving growth and prosperity in South Essex as a key part of the Thames Gateway. It covers a number of cross cutting themes including transport, education and skills, enterprise and innovation, environment, urban renaissance, health and community infrastructure.

Question 4

What sectors would you identify as potential target sectors for Southend?

Answer

Mr. Pollock informed the Committee that Southend should build on its strengths: education (HE / FE), health and social care, business (banking, finance, insurance), hotel / conferencing, leisure and tourism, creative and cultural industries, media and aviation.

Question 5

How can Southend become more sustainable and attract people to live and work in the Borough?

Answer

Mr. Pollock informed the Committee that the Council should make sure the right balance is struck between jobs/homes/infrastructure, which will include the appropriate phasing of development. Role of URC and University will be crucial. Other measures would include; improving and maintaining the quality of the local environment and developing the concept of Green Grid, improving the industrial stock of premises, promoting green travel plans and developing a contact system with Southend's top 150 businesses.

Question 6

The Eastern side of Southend currently suffers from accessibility problems. due to the linear nature of the Borough, is it recognised by your organisation that this is currently a major constraint in developing the borough and do you believe this could be combated?

Answer

Mr. Pollock confirmed to the Committee than a Transport Board has been set up to find collective solutions to such transport issues and that transport remains a priority in the East of England Plan.

Mr. Pollock continued by saying that transport issues were on the agenda for discussion with the Department of Transport, especially regarding the deficit investment position and proposals to address already identified "bottle necks" in the transport network.

Question 7

Do we have a sufficient and appropriate amount of land to fulfil the targets?

Answer

Mr. Pollock told the Committee that the targets are based on work undertaken by Southend Council Officers and Members. Land availability is a local planning matter. The Council need to maximise development potential on existing site provision, to improve for example industrial/Higher Education and hotel & conference stock.

Question 8

What impact would 13,000 jobs have on the local environment and infrastructure?

Answer

Mr. Pollock informed the Committee that job targets agreed by officers in context of land availability – will be used in Southend's Core Strategy and Local Development Framework (LDF). Through this process, the targets will define the precise implications. Green Grid principles should be incorporated into regeneration strategies and master-planning proposals.

Question 9

What will be the impact of technological advancements on the town? Particularly remembering that the Southend economy is mainly service sector orientated?

Answer

Mr. Pollock responded to the Committee by saying do any of us know? It is vital for all to be aware of changes in technology. Important to Southend's future especially in relation to banking/finance and its potential to attract hi-tech entrepreneurs.

Additional Points

- The Committee commented on the fact the in the West of the town, there are no areas of development and some buses have ceased to run, whilst in the East there are areas available for development, but that it would require a major road project to open it up
- There needs to be improvements to the A127/M25 link
- It was also noted that Mr. Hill MP, when opening the Pier Head, was impressed with the local developments, unfortunately all of the neighbouring authorities need to want the same thing, otherwise funding will not be forthcoming
- It is vital that the correct infrastructure be in place before developments take place
- With regard to job creation, the Committee noted that marketing and branding of the area was of utmost importance. Selling the South East in a difference way by promoting things that cut across all areas of the Thames Gateway.

The Chairman, Councillor Foster thanked Mr. Pollock for attending and providing evidence to the scrutiny.

2. QUESTIONS TO SOUTH EAST ESSEX COLLEGE

Sue Coole responded as follows to the questions previously submitted on behalf of the Committee:-

Question 1

What role does the education sector play in terms of provision of courses to meet the job growth figures?

Answer

Ms. Coole informed the Committee that South East Essex College (SEEC), as a large and growing General FE College, is playing a significant role in terms. of the provision of courses to meet the job growth figures. With a new £52m building in the town centre the College, and in partnership with the University of Essex, is helping to regenerate the town.

Sue explained that SEEC educates some 2750 young people and over 10,000 adults each year and in the last ten years the College has seen significant growth in student numbers and in the range of courses on offer at all levels. A Joint Venture Agreement has been signed with the University of Essex and the College now recruits over 1000 HE students a year with an overall target figure of 1500. The expansion of FE opportunities, both for young people and adults who want to return to learning - and in HE, is helping ensure Southend has the people it needs with the right skills in order to boost the local economy.

The College itself is a growing institution and is one of the largest employers in the area helping to provide employment opportunities. In addition, the growth in staff and student numbers is having a positive boost on local businesses. As the College continues to grow in the future these trends will increase.

Question 2

What national/ regional and local interventions might help Southend achieve the job targets?

Answer

Ms. Coole advised the Committee that additional funding for Further Education and investment in education would help the College continue to grow. In 2005/06, in common with other FE Colleges across the county, SEEC is facing cuts in LSC funding for adult provision overall.

Further investment in the town to make it a more attractive place for businesses to invest and in which to live and work, as well as a better road infrastructure.

In 2006 Stage 2 of the development of the campus will open. Students will require accommodation if the College/Essex University partnership is to develop. Work has been done with the Council regarding a Student Housing Policy, with the possibility of using the old Prudential building for student housing.

Question 3

What are the expectations of partners as to how Southend should achieve economic growth?

Answer

Ms. Coole informed the Committee that economic growth could be achieved by the following means:-

- Via high quality services and high tech businesses.
- Through supporting entrepreneurship and the SME sector. Helping more SME's survive and thrive through better business support and help with skill development. Essex LSC Profit from Learning Programme is a good example of how this can work. It would benefit SMEs if this type of support was extended.
- Offer good support for new graduates and other College students wanting to establish their own businesses – the Incubation Centre planned for Phase 2 of the campus will assist with this.
- Need to focus on developing the seafront to offer exciting leisure and pleasure facilities and ensure we capitalise fully on the tremendous resource we have. Better hotels and accommodation to encourage visitors to stay overnight. Better road infrastructure will encourage more visitors.

Question 4

What should/ could the council do to encourage job creations – and how should we do it?

Answer

Ms. Coole informed the Committee that the Council needs to create a strong brand image for Southend as a go ahead place full of opportunities, in a great location,

with great people with higher level skills. Be as business friendly as possible – creating the right supportive environment and reducing red tape. Make Southend an attractive, clean and safe town within a fantastic location. Exploit what we do well and ‘celebrate’ locally and nationally.

Question 5

Are there any issues relating to adult education provision, the employment of teaching staff and young population leaving/ or after education?

Answer

Ms. Coole informed the Committee that it can be difficult to attract and retain teaching staff in Southend – the image is not always that attractive and it is an expensive area to live, with no outer London weighting. There is also a differential between funding for schools and that for FE. Importance of high quality, flexible FE opportunities to allow adults the opportunity to update their skills and return to learning when they require it. Courses need to be flexible, with the ability to buy in at any time and gain credits. The credit system works by allocating points for each year of a course e.g. 30 points for a 1 year course, these can be banked and additional credits added as and when levels of knowledge are achieved.

We need to capitalise on local Higher Education provision to keep young people in Southend, extend the job and business opportunities linked to higher skill levels.

Question 6

How do you see job growth fitting into the aspiration of Southend developing itself as a cultural and intellectual hub?

Answer

Ms. Coole suggested to the Committee this it would be an excellent opportunity for the area to capitalise on its strengths.

Question 7

What sectors would you like to see jobs created in and how likely is job creation in these sectors?

Answer

Ms. Coole informed the Committee that job creation could be in the following areas:-

- **Creative Industries** – link to Cultural Hub concept. Already a significant artistic/cultural centre here. The College is a Centre of Vocational Excellence for Media Technology and its proximity to London is very helpful.
- **IT and E-commerce and online services** - removes/reduces negative impact of road infrastructure difficulties. Allows tremendous scope for SME creation and development to capitalise on entrepreneurial culture of the area. The College is one of only 16 UK Microsoft Regional Centres – training increasing numbers of students and graduates in this area each year.
- **Public Sector Services** - Health, Education, Care and Childcare etc. – to help meet the needs of the growing population in the Thames Gateway South Essex.

- **Sports, Leisure, Travel and Tourism** - To meet growth in Southend as a leisure and tourism destination, with more promotion perhaps being given to water sports.

Question 8

What skills will be required to meet the new job demands? And what could be done in the short, medium and long term to create jobs in the outlined industries?

Answer

Ms. Coole informed the Committee that there would be a need for employees with a good range of key employability skills – communication, numeracy, IT, team working, organising and managing self and time etc. The College puts a great deal of attention in these key skills in its approach to learning. Development of high level generic, transferable skills leads to extended employment opportunities.

Ms. Coole continued by saying that was also a need for higher level skills – at technical and higher levels, e.g. the College is developing new Foundation degrees in partnership with employers.

Recently a conference was held for 300 youngsters with a view to a career in Health Education Services, as a result of this all have taken up a Health and Social Care Course. The hospital does a lot of training, in order to provide trained staff the College will develop a medical/dental school.

Question 9

What do you see as the barriers to achieving the jobs targets (including social issues)

Answer

Ms. Coole informed the Committee that she sees the barriers to achieving the jobs targets as follows:-

- A need to improve the image of Southend;
- Lack of sufficient investment;
- Lack of infrastructure improvements;
- Inability to recruit and retain appropriately skilled staff;
- Tackle social issues and development of higher living standards via improved literacy and numeracy levels.
- High levels of deprivation, creates low levels of esteem and negativity, this needs to be turned around by breaking the cultural stigma by raising the young peoples aspirations
- Community shops are usually used by adults returning to education, whilst the College cannot fund these shops, it can provide the courses and staff.

Question 10

What impact will the growth in e-commerce have on job creation or decline and should we be encouraging this type of working?

Answer

Ms. Coole informed the Committee that it is likely to have a positive impact creating new job opportunities and allow for more flexible ways of delivering services and

working. Yes – ideal for Southend to help generate new employment opportunities and overcome degree of geographical isolation and road network difficulties.

The Chairman, Councillor Foster thanked Ms. Coole for attending and providing evidence to the scrutiny.

3 **QUESTIONS TO RENAISSANCE SOUTHEND**

Stuart Greengrass responded as follows to the questions previously submitted on behalf of the Committee:-

Question 1

What sectors would you identify as potential target sectors for Southend?

Answer

Mr. Greengrass informed the Committee that in the future jobs will require a higher level of skills and education than at present. The development of the College, University and Prospects, which provides vocational training, will be essential to provide the necessary technological skills that could be required due to the airport development and the possibility of expanding the engineering areas. Other areas for development will be leisure, tourism, banking and finance.

Question 2

How can Southend attract more firms to locate in the area?

Answer

Mr. Greengrass informed the Committee that the EEDA promote Southend as an attractive location for investment, and a partnership between the Council and Renaissance Southend has developed.

The industrial estates in surrounding area need to be looked at, and practical steps need to be taken for their regeneration so that they become competitive on the open market. In the short term the general appearance could be improved by looking at the signage and open space around the businesses.

Renaissance Southend together with the Council will need to take the lead in the regeneration of these areas and look more closely at the type of business being run in the units.

Mr. Greengrass continued by saying that in leisure and tourism improvements need to be made. Southend has 6 million visitors, but there is low expenditure, the Council need to exploit a better spending pattern, better utilisation of the shore front e.g. sailing, together with the arts and music. Renaissance Southend could commission a study regarding hotel capacity and people wanting to stay.

He continued by saying that the Casino Resort would provide a reason for people to visit and stay, and as hotels prefer to have sites with sea views the Council needs to seek potential for future development in this area also.

Question 3

How can Southend become more sustainable and attract people to live and work in the Borough?

Answer

Mr. Greengrass informed the Committee that higher value jobs must be attracted to the Borough and in attracting such employers, it is necessary to encourage them to seek employees locally. But better education and skills development is vital to ensure the new roles can be filled. For this to be achieved, it is necessary, to encourage employers to make it attractive for skilled staff to seek and stay in jobs in Southend. Schools should also be encouraged to get closer to business, so pupils see the opportunities of working in industry. There is a need for affordable housing for young persons, not just key workers. To work closely with all areas of education to retain local graduates in suitable employment.

Hopefully with the aid of Renaissance Southend working to link private sector partners with Council sectors, this will bring forward development in the area of job provision. He explained that he felt that an Urban Renaissance Company had been the correct choice for Southend.

Question 4

The Eastern side of Southend currently suffers from accessibility problems due to the linear nature the Borough. Is it recognised by your organisation that this is currently a large constraint in developing the borough and how do you believe this could be addressed?

Answer

Mr. Greengrass informed the Committee that the eastern side of Southend is in need of regeneration, there is great potential, but it does need the correct infrastructure in place e.g. road/rail, as well as schools and medical facilities for it to succeed. In order that this could be achieved an outer relief road/northern access road would be needed with funding found from investment partners.

He continued by saying that a link across to Kent would be an exciting project, and it would open the access routes to the continent, and that Renaissance Southend would support this issue if the opportunity arose.

Question 5

Do we have a sufficient and appropriate amount of land to fulfil the targets?

Answer

Mr. Greengrass informed the Committee that the target would be a challenge, but brown fill sites need to be looked at for developing in the future in conjunction with the Councils LDF.

Question 6

What impact would 13,000 jobs have on the local environment?

Answer

Mr. Greengrass responded by saying that approximately 1,000 jobs a year would have to be found with lots of work being done to regenerate the town, this would be

positive to the environment, which in turn create a more prosperous area as there is a higher level of spending. The negative side to this would be a growth in traffic, pressure on existing resources, housing and commercial property. Affordable housing could be achieved by mixed use developments and that design and quality are important.

Question 7

What will be the impact of technological advancements on the town, particularly remembering that the Southend economy is mainly service sector orientated?

Answer

Mr. Greengrass informed the Committee that manufacturing in the town has dropped dramatically over the years, but the town has lots of technical and industrial assets such as Ipeco, Lashams, RBS and Keymed, all of which have highlighted the need for improvements in business accommodation. There is also a need to provide better business accommodation for start up businesses.

The Chairman, Councillor Foster thanked Mr. Greengrass for attending and providing evidence to the scrutiny.

4 QUESTIONS TO LEISURE PORTFOLIO HOLDER

Councillor North responded as follows to the questions previously submitted on behalf of the Committee:-

Question 1

Southend is a popular tourist destination: what role do you see tourism performing in terms of growing the economy and creating job growth?

Answer

Councillor North informed the Committee that tourism is a major contributor to the economic health of the Borough – some key statistics are detailed below:

Value of Tourism

Over a six year period, the overall value of tourism showed an increase of £64.2 million (the studies identified tourism expenditure as being £135.7 million in 1998, £184.9 million in 2000 and £199.9 million in 2002).

Staying visitor spend showed an increase of £9.3 million over that period – £20.8 million generated in 1998, (15% of the overall tourism spend), rising to £38.4 million in 2000 (21%), but showing a decrease in 2002 of £30.1 million (15%).

Day visitors were identified as being the main source of tourism income in all 3 studies, generating some £114.9 million in 1998, rising to £146.5 million in 2000 and £169.7 million in 2002, which shows an overall increase of £54.8 million over the 6 year period.

Volume of Tourism

Over the six year period, the studies also showed a growth in the number of visitors to Southend, with an overall increase of 1.76 million (4,634,000 in 1998, 5,736,000 in 2000 and 6,397,400 in 2002).

The number of staying visitors has increased by almost 20% over the 6 years, even though there is a slight dip in the number of staying visitors in 2002 when compared to 2000 (234,000 in 1998, 336,000 in 2000, 282,400 in 2002).

The greatest increase was to the day visitor numbers, rising by 1.7 million, representing a growth of almost 45% (4,400,000 in 1998, 5,400,000 in 2000 and 6,115,000 in 2002).

The findings from these studies demonstrate that Southend's main market is predominately day visitors. The number of staying visitors is low in comparison, due to the lack of bedstock that Southend currently has, as concluded in the Humberts Leisure Hotel Study carried out in 2002.

Impact of Tourism Expenditure

The 3 studies also examined the impact of tourism expenditure in terms of spend by different business sectors, and the number of full time equivalent jobs (FTE's) supported by that expenditure.

When considering part time and seasonal workers, the studies identified that tourism expenditure supported 3,845 actual jobs in 1998, 5,246 in 2000 and 6,232 in 2002.

The information from these 3 studies shows the importance of tourism to the local economy, and when compared, shows a healthy increase to the volume and value and the impact of tourism expenditure in Southend over a 6 year period.

Key issues:

- A key issue here will be the future of Casino Resort Development within the Borough.
- There needs to be a diversification of the tourist offer - to further develop opportunities to present Leigh-on-Sea as a short trip destination and also develop opportunities for cultural and environmental and business tourism.
- To sustain and increase the current volume and value of the day visit market and to increase the length of stay of visitors to the town.
- Promotion and expansion in to a leisure and conferencing destination which will also encourage business tourism.
- Further develop the concept of the '24 hour town' with an extension of the season beyond the summer, and longer opening hours. Encourage the café culture rather than the drinking culture, making the Borough one where families can come during the early evening.
- Sporting trip to ST & LC.

- Expand the cultural offer that the town has using the current assets and the potential new student culture positively. Councillor North mentioned the Saxon King and positive future there in that could be a destination in its own right.

Question 2

What can Southend Council do to facilitate this growth?

Answer

Councillor North informed the Committee that as a major coastal resort the provision of high quality resort services including the seafront, the Pier, the beaches and foreshore, leisure and tourist attractions/facilities is vital to achieving this objective. Members are clearly aware that the Council continues to work hard to secure the investment required to sustain and develop its wider cultural infrastructure.

- To continue challenge the negative external perceptions about the Borough and the negative economic impact that this can have.
- To further develop the Council's regional voice and Southend as a hub for Culture & Learning as part of the Thames Gateway.
- The re-branding of Southend and the development of high level strategic joint marketing campaigns, managed by professional agencies, to re position Southend in the context of its position vis a viz London, the East of England, Thames Gateway and the South East.
- Planning process & licensing process to be utilised to encourage extended opening hours for the town & the town centre.
- Consider the concept of cultural quarters in the town centre and the development of Leigh-on-Sea as a 'cultural village'.
- Working with partners at a regional & sub-regional level to promote Southend as a leisure & cultural destination.
- To secure the further development of new hotel provision within the Borough.
- Actively encourage the findings of the EDAW report to be considered and adopted where appropriate (when they are available).
- Continue to work hard with its private sector partners to create an environment that encourages further private sector investment.
- Continue development of high profile arts and design led regeneration projects to help signal Southend's new identity as a creative and vibrant urban coastal resort – this can have a major impact on 'image'.
- Work to secure improved beach facilities west of the Pier.

Question 3

What are the major barriers to growing the leisure economy?

Answer

Councillor North informed the Committee of the following possible barriers:-

- The wider leisure & cultural infrastructure requires significant capital investment to keep the 'offer' fresh, relevant and sustainable.
- Potentially the negative external perceptions of the Borough.
- Poor press coverage also has a damaging effect.
- Perception of crime in the town centre and on the seafront.
- Land available for development.
- Lack of quality hotels to meet the over night stay requirements and those of business tourists.

Question 4

Leisure and tourism creates jobs across numerous employment sectors, what sectors do you believe are complimented by leisure and tourism?

Answer

Councillor North informed the Committee of the following areas where employment could be created:-

- Retail
- The 'Creative Industries'
- Catering
- Property Development
- Business tourism & conferencing facilities
- Growth of the airport in Southend and the potential to develop greater 'European' links

Question 5

Southend is seen as a tourist destination for the summer: what would you suggest we could do to create an all year round tourism offer?

Answer

Councillor North informed the Committee that the Council would need to develop the following areas to create a tourist destination:-

- Secure investment required to improve the Council's existing Leisure & Cultural infrastructure – e.g. Pier, swimming facilities etc.
- Develop proposals re the Saxon King.
- Consideration of how to exploit the Leigh-on-Sea 'cultural village' for the whole of Southend.
- Encourage activities in the town centre which promote lengthening of day time activities.
- Potential for a cultural quarter in the town.
- Build links with the educational institutions in Southend.
- Keep regional casino issue at forefront of leisure development opportunities (there is a feeling that post election the law of only being one regional casino may change).

Question 6

Are there any skill gaps you are aware of in the leisure industry in Southend?

Answer

Councillor North responded to the Committee by stating that:

- One witness identified that the leisure and tourism industry was limited in its knowledge of the support on offer from agencies like ourselves with reference to business support.
- Need for marketing skills to be developed.
- Customer service skills.

Additional Points

- There is a need to market Southend to attract good hotel chains such as Hilton and Marriott, the Ambassador chain is being linked with the Gas Works site, and they provide a traditional style of hotel
- The hotels would need to be able to provide a complete facility, accommodation, conference suite and restaurant
- A Museum of the Saxon King with other facilities could provide a fully day out, a new Iconic Museum would have potential
- Parks in the town could be better utilised by adding an attraction to them
- The provision of shower facilities and trampolines on the shore front could be looked at
- The town does not have a National Trust Building, but Sutton Manor, Shoebury is a listed building and in the future the Iron Age Fort at Fossetts Farm could be utilised better to encourage day trips.

The Chairman, Councillor Foster thanked Councillor North for attending and providing evidence to the scrutiny.

WITNESS SESSION NO.4

Held on 26th May 2005

ATTENDEES

- (1) Mr. Bill Mossman – Head of Operations, Business Link 4 Essex;
- (2) Councillor Anna Waite – Leader of the Council

RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS

1. QUESTIONS TO BUSINESS LINK 4 ESSEX

Mr. Bill Mossman responded as follows to the questions previously submitted on behalf of the Committee:-

Question 1

What sectors would you identify as potential target growth sectors for Southend?

Answer

Mr. Mossman informed the Committee that in a recent report commissioned by the Thames Gateway South East Partnership (TGSEP), produced by Ancer Spa, the following sectors were identified with potential for growth:

Transport and Logistics

With the planned growth of Shell Haven and Tilbury port transport and logistics will play a vital role in delivering the planned growth.

The Academy of Logistics and Transport has been set up through Anglia Polytechnic University in partnership with key Essex-based logistic organisations and suppliers to develop an approach to the increasing demand for trained personnel and easy access training providers.

Aviation and Avionics

The proposed growth of London Southend Airport will place an increased demand on existing companies that support this sector and also provide opportunities for existing locally-based companies and the creation of new enterprises to support the increasing requirements.

Leisure and Sport

Southend on Sea is ideally placed and has an opportunity to become the sport and leisure centre for the East of London/south of the Eastern region population to spend their spare time and disposable income.

The planned seafront development and the Olympic bid provide opportunities to market the town's natural assets. If the Olympic bid is successful, some businesses could be displaced into or attracted to Essex, but not necessarily Southend.

Media and Creative

The region already benefits from an established multimedia network, the East of England Multi Media Alliance (EMMA). Existing expertise in the University of Essex,

Southend Campus provides learning facilities and opportunities to develop as a media and creative centre for vocational excellence.

Southend airport provides easy access to recognised cities of culture such as Cardiff, Edinburgh and Bristol. The future holds the possibility of flights to and from European cultural centres.

Question 2

How can Southend attract more firms to locate in the area?

Answer

Mr. Mossman informed the Committee that there would be a need to regenerate existing industrial sites by providing business-ready buildings. It would be necessary to consult with the utilities to understand existing and future capacities.

Develop a prestigious image and market business-ready Southend within the Thames gateway envelope and the strategy to businesses requiring higher level skills.

Maintain the focus on the training of higher level skills in order to maintain the businesses which require employees with these skills. Regarding these skills the Learning and Skills Council is looking at providing more vocational courses in schools.

Work in partnership with Business Link for Essex to provide business start-up development and support services.

Improve the road and rail infrastructure to ensure Southend-based companies can more easily access the UK transport network.

Question 3

How can Southend become more sustainable and attract people to live and work in the Borough?

Answer

Mr. Mossman informed the Committee that the Council needs to work in partnership with public transport providers to ensure a frequent and reliable service, and develop park and ride to reduce town centre congestion. With regard to public transport, as some routes are privately run, it might need Council intervention to provide fast reliable services in the future.

Promote home working through the use of broadband technology.

Market Southend on Sea as a place to live, work and play. At the moment the perception of Southend is not good and the Council has a role in helping to change this image. The College is providing a good positive image for the future, and has experienced a 45% increase in student applications. When budgets are tight, marketing is the first to be sacrificed, but unfortunately this can be detrimental to the future development of an area.

Question 4

The Eastern side of Southend currently suffers from accessibility problems due to the linear nature of the Borough. Is it recognised by your organisation that this is currently a large constraint in developing the Borough and how do you believe this could be addressed?

Answer

Mr. Mossman informed the Committee that this is not Business Link's field of expertise although it would require co-operation with adjacent authorities to develop a route into the eastern side of the Borough.

Question 5

Do we have a sufficient and appropriate amount of land to fulfil the targets?

Answer

Mr. Mossman informed the Committee that this is not Business Link's field of expertise although he did comment that existing industrial areas need to be regenerated and developed to attract sustainable business' into the area. If buildings are vacant, this would suggest they are not fit for purpose. Planning powers are best used for future regeneration and planners need to be pro-active in working with businesses and the Southend Borough Council economic development team to co-ordinate business property development in the future.

Question 6

What impact would 13,000 jobs have on the local environment?

Answer

Mr. Mossman informed the Committee that there would be an impact on the utility services and disruption to the local environment whilst new provisions are being installed. Unless innovations such as park & ride are introduced, it could lead to increased pollution due to an increase in traffic volumes. There would also be an increased demand for council services such as waste disposal and road cleansing.

Mr. Mossman continued by saying there would be a requirement for transport management, local services and infrastructure which in turn could have an impact on the retention of Blue Flag status for Southend's beaches.

Question 7

What will be the impact of technological advancements on the town, particularly remembering that the Southend economy is mainly service sector orientated?

Answer

Mr. Mossman informed the Committee that a key opportunity could exist with the increase in usage of broadband and Southend's strength in the Multi Media sector. This could lead to more start up/home based businesses in Southend with the associated economic benefits this would bring.

At present, there is little service provision to support high value/ high growth start ups. This will be addressed within the Regional Start Up Strategy through the Greater Essex Steering Group that has been established to deliver the regional strategy in Essex, Thurrock and Southend on Sea.

Mr. Mossman continued by saying that whilst it is not in their remit, they do go into schools to make them aware of how to start a business.

Finally, Mr. Mossman commented that when businesses are deciding where to locate, key factors are communication, tax breaks and location.

The Chairman, Councillor Delaney thanked Mr. Mossman for attending and providing evidence to the scrutiny.

2. QUESTIONS TO COUNCILLOR WAITE

Councillor Waite responded as follows to the questions previously submitted on behalf of the Committee:-

Question 1

What policies in the region/growth area will help to stimulate the local economy?

Answer

Councillor Waite informed the Committee of various policies and strategies which form part of the East of England Plan and will be relevant to developing and promoting the economic functions and performance of Southend to achieve the jobs targets set.

Councillor Waite added that the Council's Local Development Plan must reflect this framework. Funding would be available from the Council, Thames Gateway and Central Government.

Question 2

What sectors would you identify as potential target sectors for Southend?

Answer

Councillor Waite suggested to the Committee that there were many areas that could be looked at, the following key areas being of particular importance:-

- Tourism – to develop as a resort for weekend breaks
- Retail – development of an enhanced shopping experience
- Engineering/light industry – strong in this area e.g. Keymed and Hi-tec, but must continue to work with them to maintain their business success
- University – the proposed development of post-graduate study and research development projects
- Media/Performing Arts – great potential with the opening of the University

Councillor Waite continued by saying that Renaissance Southend was undertaking a survey on behalf of the Council looking at the condition of the industrial estates for the future and whether it would be more economic to start again rather than regenerate them. Sites are required for engineering/light industry, but this does require marketing and the need to go out and actively seek businesses. The recently appointed Portfolio Holder will be going out to discuss with business whether they can encourage their partners to come to Southend. EEDA are also looking at the improvement of industrial estates.

Question 3

How can Southend become more sustainable and attract people to live and work in the Borough?

Answer

Councillor Waite informed the Committee that we need to make Southend more attractive, via cosmetic changes such as improvements to the streetscene, planting etc. Improve job opportunities for local children are needed, especially after University as more local graduates leave for better jobs elsewhere. There needs to be a way of redressing the wage differential, again to stop people leaving Southend to work. We must also build properties that people want and can afford and redevelop old properties; affordability is an area covered in the Local Development Plan.

Councillor Waite continued by saying that the television coverage of this area could be better, as we are not seen as part of East Anglia, but as part of London. If coverage was of Essex this could be a lot more beneficial for Southend. Development of tourism as a hotel, conference and casino destination would encourage visitors from outside.

Having an airport shows that we are open for business and future development; this raises the status and profile of the town.

Question 4

The Eastern side of Southend currently suffers from accessibility problems due to the linear nature of the Borough. Is it recognised by your organisation that this is currently a large constraint in developing the Borough and how do you believe this could be combated?

Answer

Councillor Waite suggested that this would be combated by the improvement of the infrastructure from west to east by working more closely with the Council's partners.

Question 5

Do we have a sufficient and appropriate amount of land to fulfil the targets?

Answer

Councillor Waite confirmed that there was sufficient and appropriate land to fulfil the targets, otherwise the Council would not have been in a position to sign up to the East of England Plan.

The Local Development Framework details future developments regarding streetscene and overcapacity. The Development Control Committee needed to apply regulations more rigorously to stop inappropriate developments.

Question 6

What impact would 13,000 jobs have on the local environment?

Answer

It would be beneficial and make the town more prosperous, attract better developers and developments with better designs, and this in turn will spread into the streetscene as long as the correct infrastructure is in place.

Due to the high levels of unemployment in the town, the majority of the 13,000 job would be found from the unemployed.

The Chairman, Councillor Delaney thanked Councillor Waite for attending and providing evidence to the scrutiny.

WITNESS SESSION NO.5

Held on 11th July 2005

ATTENDEE

Jamie Merrick - East of England Development Agency (EEDA)

1. RESPONSES TO QUESTIONS

QUESTIONS TO EAST OF ENGLAND DEVELOPMENT AGENCY

Jamie Merrick responded as follows to the questions previously submitted on behalf of the Committee:-

Question 1

Achieving 13,000 net additional jobs in the local economy is a substantial challenge for the Borough, what data source should we use to measure jobs numbers?

Answer

Mr Merrick informed the Committee that there are various agencies which provide data to measure job numbers.

The Census data for 1991/2001 gives a detailed analysis of the types of jobs residents of the Borough have including commuter flow. There is also the Annual Business Inquiry and the Labour Force Survey, both of these takes samples quarterly and annually on the labour force. These are survey based and specifically regarding Essex these surveys show a different employment structure than census data. This information does not reflect whether an employee lives in or commutes to Southend for work (of a total work force of 280,000 in South Essex, approximately 80,000 out commute).

Question 2

Is the figure of 13,000 jobs achievable?

Answer

Mr Merrick said that Southend is in a good location with its close proximity to London, as well as having a number of 'key transformers' e.g. a resort casino, the University, giving a basis for learning opportunities. The airport development will provide new job opportunities in the future as well as indirect growth through retail, cleaning and construction. He continued that the Borough does have spatial capacity to grow.

Mr Merrick informed the Committee that the area has the potential to offer a good quality of life. Investment in the town is essential and areas off of the main High Street should be promoted to create retail diversity.

Industrial estates in the Borough have a range of various property types and size and the Council needs to understand the ownership of these estates and whether there would be a need to change from single use to maybe mixed usage, before investing in a regeneration programme. Locally owned retail businesses need to be encouraged so that revenue stays in the town.

Mr Merrick was informed by the Committee that in Victoria Ward there is 7.6% male unemployment and was asked whether this cycle could be broken with regard to finding employment. He stated that the cycle can be broken but it is a long term project and would need to be tackled from the early year's stage. Adults must attain basic skills development and the use of 'Outreach' programmes was suggested as they are easily accessible and often less intimidating. The Chairman advised that the Tomlinson Report for 14-19 year olds, suggested that vocational support was needed for this group.

Questions 3 and 4

What policies in the region/growth area will help to stimulate the local economy? And what sectors would you identify as potential target sectors for Southend?

Answer

Mr Merrick said that Southend is a major player in the region and referred to 'Regional Cities East' (Ipswich, Peterborough, Luton, Colchester, Norwich and Southend) and that EEDA are keen to give support. He also said that Southend should continue to build on its leisure and tourism business together with the airport and its related services. Southend should look at capturing sectors from London, but before this can be done a business package needs to be put together to demonstrate the investment potential and quality of life available in the area to prospective investors.

Mr Merrick continued by saying that there is a potential for growth from the University creating 'niche' markets. For example, Leigh with regard to galleries etc. and with regard to medical technology 'Keymed' is a global player who will develop its links with the University enabling the development of a good skills base.

It is essential that Southend look to providing good quality hotels that cater for the business and tourism markets, but these do not necessarily need to be on the seafront, therefore zoning of this area is a good idea.

As a result of the Olympic coming to London in 2012, there is a greater potential for the need for the development of hotels and the airport facilities as London is unlikely to be able to cope with the huge demand in these areas.

Question 5

How can Southend become more sustainable and attract people to live and work in the Borough?

Answer

Mr Merrick informed the Committee that the Council should make sure that the infrastructure on road/rail routes are in place to enable smooth movement, especially in the east, around the Borough. To provide integrated transport systems i.e. park and ride, to alleviate congestion in the town centre and promote the town in a positive light. There needs to be the right balance between jobs/homes/infrastructure.

Question 6

The Eastern side of Southend currently suffers from accessibility problems. due to the linear nature of the Borough, is it recognised by your organisation that this is currently a major constraint in developing the borough and do you believe this could be combated?

Answer

Mr Merrick confirmed that EEDA were in negotiations regarding the development of the Ranges at Shoebury and are a partner in the master planning of the New Ranges. There are access issues and it would be necessary to have a dialogue with neighbouring council's and the Gateway partners to find a solution.

Question 7

Do we have a sufficient and appropriate amount of land to fulfil the targets?

Answer

Mr. Merrick told the Committee that if schemes are in place and land is reused there would be sufficient to fulfil the 13,000 target. It is essential to maintain the diversity of the town, and not focus on attracting one type of jobs sector.

Mr. Merrick continued by saying that the relocation of Southend United Football Club is important to the status of the town and the role it plays in the community, the facilities should be looked at as to whether they could be better utilised.

Question 8

What impact would 13,000 jobs have on the local environment and infrastructure?

Answer

Mr. Merrick informed the Committee that initially there would be an impact, but developers could assist with providing environmentally friendly developments, with long term benefits.

He felt that the Council should look at the business support for environmental issues, have mixed use sites i.e. housing and business along with civic space and better integration of transport routes.

He continued by saying that the infrastructure should be phased to enable development to be sustainable, this in turn would generate local jobs making them attractive to the Borough residents. There is also a need to attract higher value jobs which creates service user jobs.

Mr. Merrick suggested that the South Essex Transport Board was a way forward to discuss the development of Southend and its surrounding areas. It was suggested that there was an opportunity to make better use of the towns' access to the Thames to fully examine what the economic benefits would be with an access across the river east of Dartford.

Question 9

What will be the impact of technological advancements on the town? Particularly remembering that the Southend economy is mainly service sector orientated?

Answer

Mr. Merrick responded to the Committee by saying that work force training needs to reflect changes in the work place, EEDA are investing, in conjunction with the University, in the Innovation Centre to assist with the transfer of knowledge.

In response to a question, Mr. Merrick said that Southend is a fantastic place with huge opportunities. EEDA funds a 1/3 of costs of Renaissance Southend, which reflects their commitment to the town.

The Chairman Councillor Delaney thanked Mr. Merrick for attending and providing evidence to the scrutiny.

ATTENDANCE AT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE & WITNESS SESSIONS

- 29th September 2004 (ordinary meeting) – Councillors Brown, Flewitt, J. Garston, George, Houssart, Latham, D. Norman, I. Robertson, Smith, Terry, Walker, Moring. In attendance: Councillors Crystall, Briggs, Kelly, D. Garston, Lamb.
- 8th December 2004 (ordinary meeting) – Councillors Foster, Delaney, Brown, Flewitt, George, Houssart, Latham, D. Norman, I. Robertson, Terry, Walker, Jarvis, Wexham. In attendance: Councillors Longley, Day, Ascroft, Cole, Crystall, Miss Cushion, Davy, Mrs. Evans, Price, Mrs. Rayner, Mrs. Robertson, Mrs. White, Garne, Mrs. Merrison, Robinson, Clinkscales, Mrs. Roast, Briggs, Mrs. Carr, Lamb, Mrs. Holland, Kelly, D. Garston, Mrs. Horrigan, Waite, North.
- 3rd February 2005 – Foster, Delaney, Flewitt, J. Garston, Houssart, D. Norman, Longley, I. Robertson, Smith, Terry, Walker, Jarvis. In attendance: Councillors Day, Mrs. Roast, Briggs, Mrs. Carr, Kelly, D. Garston, Mrs. Horrigan, North, Mrs. Weaver.
- 9th March 2005 @ 4 p.m. – Councillors Foster, Delaney, Brown, Flewitt, George, Houssart, Walker, Day. In attendance: Councillor D. Garston.
- 13th April 2005 – Councillors Foster, Brown, J. Garston, Houssart, I. Robertson. Witnesses – Mr Pennington (Dedmans); Mr. Batty (KeyMed); Mr Campbell & Mr Baker (Southend Airport); Mr. Dowdall (EETB).
- 15th April 2005 – Councillors Foster, Flewitt, Houssart, D. Norman, I. Robertson, Terry. In attendance: Councillor Dr. Velmurugan. Witnesses – Councillor D Garston (portfolio holder); Ms. J. Logie (LSC); Ms. L. Jones (University of Essex).
- 9th May 2005 – Councillors Foster, Delaney, J. Garston, George, Houssart, D. Norman, I. Robertson. In attendance: Councillors Day, Crystall. Witnesses – Mr. Pollock (TGSEP); Ms. S Coole (SEEC); Mr. Greengrass (Renaissance Southend); Councillor A North (portfolio holder) and Mr. Dallaway (Director of Leisure, Culture & Amenity Services).
- 26th May 2005 – Councillors Delaney, Price, Briggs, Brown, Day, Mrs. Evans, George, D. Norman, Smith. In attendance: Councillor Crystall. Witnesses – Mr. B. Mossman (Business Link 4 Essex); Councillor Waite (Leader of the Council)
- 11th July 2005 – Councillors Delaney, Brown, Carlile, Day, J. Garston, D. Norman, Smith, Robinson. Witness – Mr. Merrick (EEDA)
- 25th August 2005 – Councillors Delaney, Briggs, Brown, Carlile, Mrs. Evans, George, Houssart, D. Norman.
- 1st December 2005 (ordinary meeting) – Councillors Delaney, Brown, Carlile, Day, Davy, Mrs. Evans, J. Garston, George, D. Norman, Smith, Mrs. Weaver, Wexham. In attendance: Councillors Waite, North, Kelly

SUMMARY OF INFORMATION PROVIDED AT WITNESS SESSIONS

HIGH PRIORITY	SBC/Partner (including private sector)
Skills Development	
High Level Skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - encourage more into Higher level skills training - to develop a highly skilled labour pool - attract businesses offering high-level skilled jobs - Graduate retention 	Partners
HE/FE Partners <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - College/University/ Prospects/ SACC & key partners - University a key transformer for basis of learning opportunities - Encourage Uni/SEEC Partnership to ensure that Southend has the people needed with right skills to boost the local economy - Flexible learning opportunities - Graduate retention issues - Vocational skills needs 	Both
Sector specific skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Skills to meet Economic Growth drivers (Refer to growth sectors diagram) 	Both
Infrastructure	
Transport (General) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - increase capacity (LDF, Ring Road, A127/A13, Internal, Access to New/Old Ranges/ Northern ring road) - Euro links (via airport)/airport tourism - Revenue/Maintenance and improvement to public services - Multi-modal transport interchange and upgrade of existing - Green Transport/ grid - Infrastructure improvements not to be done in isolation - Lower Thames Crossing 	SBC

Town Centre <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improved people movement (Signage/Cycling/rail to tourist offer) - Improve linkages throughout the town - Further investment to make the town more attractive for businesses to invest in and people to live and work - London Road - Improvements (linkages/environment/public realm) 	SBC
Leisure	
Hotel Accommodation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Good range of quality hotels and accommodation 	Both
Stay & Spend (increase) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increase overnight stays - Infrastructure investment in leisure and cultural services and offer - Needs to exploit spending patterns - Private sector investment 	SBC & Partners
Image/Marketing/ Promotion	
Business <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What type of sectors does SBC want to attract? - Encourage hotel development - Market a “Business Ready” Southend - Business-friendly and family-friendly place to live/work and play - High level, appropriately funded, strategic marketing campaign - Work with partners such as Thames Gateway South Essex to rebrand/challenge perceptions - Image - What do we see Southend as? Town by the sea or seaside town? - Brand image - Attractive, <u>clean</u> and safe - Celebrate - Utilise Olympic opportunity - Positive planning to support business growth - Proactive engagement between planning/ economic regeneration and business 	Both

Image & opportunity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Change Perception - Sport/leisure - New identity/ vibrant urban resort - Leisure + conference + hotel offer improvement - Business tourism - Café culture - Cultural offer - Saxon king - Arts - Regional Casino - Pier - Cliffs 	Both
Business Retention/ Inward Investment/ SME start ups	
Business retention <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Working in partnership with providers - Promote business support and business survival - Improve knowledge/understanding and requirements of local businesses (company visit programme) - Offer a bespoke service/solution - Dialogue with business 	Both
Property Stocks	
Industrial Estates <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ‘Business Ready’ premises including new business & Quality hi-tech new and grow on space - Regeneration of existing stock - Improving stock/ fit for purpose - Re-development of brown-field sites - More technologically focused business - Increased scope for SME development - Use of broadband - Workforce training to support reflect changing workplace environment 	SBC
Retail	
Town Centre Retail	SBC

MEDIUM PRIORITY	
Skills Development	
Statutory Provision <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Vocational skills provision to start earlier in school - School to have closer links with business - Address failing schools 	SBC
Unemployment/worklessness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Long term back to work programmes - Breaking circle of deprivation and male unemployment - Address skills gap to meet job growth targets 	Both
Life long learning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Flexible learning opportunities - Raise basic skill levels - Raising the levels of all/inclusive/ - Encourage a range of skills 	Partners
Business Involvement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Raising employee skills and encouraging participation in HE/FE by local business - Businesses develop closer links with schools 	Both
Infrastructure	
Parking Address parking issues (e.g. in London Road parking/delivery & servicing)	SBC
Physical Community infrastructure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increases to meet growth (medical/education/council services & facilities i.e. Waste) + Overcome geographic isolation and infrastructure difficulties	Both
Leisure	
Cultural <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Cultural quarters - Arts sector - Saxon king - Round the clock business opportunity 	Both
Seafront offer <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Regional casino, pier investment, marina - Promotion as a major coastal resort services seafront, Pier, beaches, foreshore, leisure and tourist 	Both

attractions - Findings of the Seafront Study (EDAW/ SBC/Renaissance Southend 2005) to be considered and where appropriate adopted	
Business Retention/ SME Start Up/ Inward Investment	
Start up - SMEs and Bigger business - Supporting enterprise development - Business Development Centre/ Business Innovation Centre (University)	Both
Inward Investment - Working with partners (East of England International/ Thames Gateway/ Chamber of Commerce) - Attraction of new business - Relocation of London-based businesses - Encourage new businesses to locate in the area - Strategic, more focused approach to inward investment (Ancer Spa) & engagement with regional partners - Attraction of businesses with large staff numbers	Both
Retail	
Future of retail development - Out of town development impacts (i.e. Fossetts) - Promote retail diversity in town centre (i.e. multinationals & local retailers) - Promote a 6-day week modern 'fit for purpose' covered market (i.e. York Road) consisting of regular stalls and others that change on a daily basis - Negative impacts on small independent retailers	Both

LOW PRIORITY	
Infrastructure	
River Thames - Transport Opportunities (Hovercraft/Crossing/Light Rail to Shell Haven)	SBC
Commuting - Reduce out commuting	SBC
Leisure	
Support to leisure industry - Diversification in leisure employment across retail, development of creative industries, catering, property development, business tourism and conferencing - Secure support from business support agencies to assist the sector	Both
Technological	
Home working - Flexible working - Reduced commuting - Work-life balance - Access broadband and IT equipment	Both
Retail	
Internet retail positive and negative – Wider customer audience – Competition to small independent retailers	Both
Housing	
Affordable housing - For key works and first-time buyers - Housing growth required - Good housing stock to attract business and people to the area - Demand for more student accommodation (student housing policy) - Lower house prices	Both
Land availability	
Site optimisation	Both

LIST OF BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Reports

1. In-depth Scrutiny Project – Economic growth aspirations for Southend-on-Sea – Report of Project Team (CETC 50) – 8th December 2004
2. Economic growth aspirations for Southend-on-Sea – Report of Chief Executive & Town Clerk – 3rd February 2005
3. In-depth Scrutiny Project – Economic growth aspirations for Southend-on-Sea – Report of Project Team (CETC 105) - special meeting 9th March 2005
4. Presentation slides to special meeting on 9th March 2005
5. Economic growth aspirations for Southend-on-Sea - reporting timetable for scrutiny project - Report of Project Team – witness session 11th July 2005

Witness sessions

(The following witness notes are available on request)

6. Notes from witness session held 13th April 2005
7. Notes from witness session held 15th April 2005
8. Notes from witness session held 9th May 2005
9. Notes from witness session held 26th May 2005
10. Notes from witness session held 11th July 2005

Minutes

11. Minutes of the Meeting of Economic Scrutiny Programme Working Party held on Thursday, 26th August, 2004 – agreed at Economic Scrutiny Committee held 29th September 2004 (minute 349 refers)
12. Extract from Economic Scrutiny Committee held 8th December 2004 (minute 631 refers)
13. Extract from Economic Scrutiny Committee held 3rd February 2005 (minute 810 refers)
14. Economic Scrutiny Committee held 9th March 2005 @ 4 p.m. (minute 1004 refers).
15. Minutes of Economic Scrutiny Committee held 13th April 2005 (witness session 1).
16. Minutes of Economic Scrutiny Committee held 15th April 2005 (witness session 2).
17. Minutes of Economic Scrutiny Committee held 9th May 2005 (witness session 3).

18. Minutes of Economic Scrutiny Committee held 26th May 2005 (witness session 4).
19. Minutes of Economic Scrutiny Committee held 11th July 2005 (witness session 5).
20. Minutes of Economic Scrutiny Committee held 25th August 2005.
21. Minutes of Economic Scrutiny Committee held 1st December 2005

Information from other organisations

22. 'Creating sustainable communities – Delivering the Thames Gateway' - ODPM

Written evidence & other evidence

23. Information tabled/referred to by Councillor Waite at witness session 4, relating to the Local Plan and the East of England Plan.

Project Team meetings

24. Meetings of the Member Project Team were held and the notes are available on request.

In-depth Scrutiny Report
'Economic growth aspirations for Southend-on-Sea'
January 2006