**Housing and Development Group (HDG)**

**(Working Group to SELEP)**

**7th June 2022**

1. **SELEP Update**

Alex updated the group on the recent activity of SELEP, most notably the creation of a SELEP Strategic Network which will act as a hub model for sector engagement.

This will provide up-to-date regional economic data and intelligence hosted on a single webpage. With space provided for news and events, information sharing and facilitated to encourage more cross-collaboration between networks and working groups across the South East.

More information will be sent to partners on this shortly.

1. **Phosphates and Nitrates**

Nick Fenton sent apologies and this item will be picked up at the next meeting.

1. **Homes England Update**

Shona updated the group on the future direction of Homes England – slides to be shared with the group.

Most notably, the department is moving away from a housing supply focus to a housing regeneration focus.

1. **Levelling Up**

Brian and Liz noted the importance of articulating this group’s impact on the levelling up agenda, and that this is a short-term priority and embedded in the terms of reference.

It was noted that there has been a good articulation of the coastal element of levelling up within SELEP and that the housing dimension to this could be a focus of the group’s work.

1. **Stewardship and Estate Charging**

Paul provided an update noting that a sub group had met a couple of times on this issue, with ASELA and Homes England reports awaited. The proposal is to keep the group going and provide regular updates this this group.

1. **Lower Thames Crossing**

Apologies were noted with this item.

1. **Planning**

Jonathan noted that planning departments are continuing to have struggles primarily due to a lack of resources, as has been noted at previous meetings.

It was noted that the group position was that any planning fee increases should be ringfenced to address planning department resource issues.

Brian noted a join action to raise planning issues with Graham as a route to have discussions with the Chief Planners.

Liz suggested drawing out a clear strategy with examples of issues in the planning system which can more effectively articulate the challenge and draw out solutions.

1. **DLUHC/HE Engagement**

Brian noted that engagement continues with the department on the core issues as outlined in the letter. Colleagues were encouraged to suggest any further items to bring to these discussions to Brian.

1. **Open Forum**

Mark noted that market conditions are not improving for the sector and that the retrofit target currently appears unattainable.

Meeting closed.