**South East Board (SEDEEPT) meeting 19 January 2018**

Ben Pledger, Deputy Director for Local Growth and Investment at BEIS / MHCLG updated the group on the recent ministerial changes:

* BEIS: Greg Clark remains as SoS, Claire Perry is the Minister for Energy and Clean Growth, Sam Gyimah is the Minister for Higher Education, Andrew Griffiths is Parliamentary Under Secretary of State (replacing Margot James).
* Ministry for Housing, Communities & Local Government: Sajid Javid as SoS, Dominic Raab is Minister of State for Housing; Jake Berry remains as Minister for the Northern Powerhouse and Local Growth; Heather Wheeler as Minister for Housing and Homelessness (replacing Marcus Jones); Rishi Sunak MP as Minister for Local Government.

Ben confirmed that the Government is keen to progress Local Industrial Strategies (LIS) first with Greater Manchester CA area, West Midlands CA area and with the Cambridge to Oxford ‘arc’ – but in the meantime he recommended that those areas interested in having a LIS should start to work up their proposals.  MHCLG currently view LIS as distinct from SEPs and, unlike SEPs, will be a joint document between the Ministry and the relevant LEP and take a more visionary, longer term strategy for economic growth of an area. He confirmed the LEP review is well under way, which follows on from the Mary Ney review (Oct 2017) and the Conservative Party manifesto commitment to give LEPs a statutory footing and make them more directly accountable to government.  An announcement on core funding for LEPs and Growth Hubs is expected imminently.

The next round of Growth Deal monies is due to go out in April but it is unlikely there will be further Growth Funding post 2021. Future growth funding *may* be included in the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (which will replace EU structural funds) and will be the subject of a public consultation later this year. Ben said Sajid Javid is still open to discuss devolution proposals.

There was a presentation about the current DfT consultation for a Major Roads Network, and an update on Transport for the South East’s outline response. TfSE has commissioned some analysis of the document’s proposed MRN for the region vs what authorities consider to be critical routes. The draft response will be considered by TFSE’s Partnership Board in early March. SEDEEPT also heard about the Oxfordshire Growth Deal, the details of which are expected to be agreed shortly, and which is for £215m, including £30m per annum over five years and £5m for capacity funding in return for delivering 86,000 new homes by 2031. The group also received updates from SESL and SEEC.