



STEERING GROUP

Minutes of the Meeting held on 18th June 2008

2.05 pm, Best Western Hotel, Marks Tey

Present:

Chair – Cllr. John Jowers – ECC (JJ)	Cllr. Peter Baggott - EALC (PB) EnvAG
Cllr. John Buchanan EALC – EERF	Terry Taber – FSB (TT) EconAG
Cllr. Mick Page – EERF (MP)	John Hall– EWT (JH) EnvAG
Nick Shuttleworth – RCCE (NS) (RCCE)	
Philip Wilson – ECC (PW) (ECC)	
Suzanne Roast - RCCE (SR) CAG (/ EERF)	
Dianne Hardy – Haven Gateway (EconAG)	
Peter Chillingworth- (PC) ELGA	
Kirsty Monk (KM) (minutes)	

Apologies:

Vice Chair – John Brown (JB)	Chris Allen –EEDA (CA)
Sandy Cruickshank -Go East (SC)	Joy Sheppard–EALC (JS) EALC - CAG
Ed Gregory- ECC (EG)	Richard Woolley – RCCE (RW) EERF
Cllr. Wendy Scattergood – ELGA (WS)	

Chairman Cllr John Jowers welcomed all to the meeting after an informative Full **Action By** Partnership Meeting earlier that morning, with special guest John Yates, Chairman of the East of England Rural Forum (EERF).

Apologies were read.

Minutes of the previous Steering Group meeting, 18th March 2008 & matters arising.

- 1 Details corrected for Peter Chillingworth on the organisational structure. No further matters of accuracy were raised

Those present agreed the minutes.

The following were reported as updates/ matters arising from those minutes:

Dianne Hardy/ East of England Development Agency

DH explained that she had indeed moved from Extra (working on Mid and West Essex

Investing in Communities (liC)) to Haven Gateway Partnership, but was employed by Essex County Council as part of the Economic Participation Team. However for the purposes of the ERP steering group she was still representing the same area of work.

JH felt that it was a shame that liC had undergone recent change, including name, and that it all the effort that it takes to set up these programmes is often underestimated.

JJ felt that the Essex Rural Partnership required a clearer view of how EEDA operate and that the partnership should aim to achieve a closer working relationship with EEDA to help deliver services.

Action

MP to liaise with SR regarding arranging Richard Ellis (EEDA) to address a future full partnership meeting.

SR/MP

Further matters arising were dealt with by the main agenda items.

2 Update from Six Counties Meeting

SR reported that the recent Six Counties Meeting in Framlingham, although rather Essex dominated, had produced a useful dialogue regarding rural proofing.

The future of the six counties meetings was in doubt due to the potential changing status of some of those counties (in view of proposals for unitary authorities) and also the lack of funding for similar groups (like the Essex Rural Partnership) or County Officers within the other member counties.

PB advised that those counties that become unitary with Parishes, such Parishes may be taken under the wing of the local association of Parish Councils in much the same way as the EALC had included those in Southend.

East of England Rural Forum (EERF) funding allocated to Six Counties:

The EERF has allocated £1000.00 to the Essex Rural Partnership to promote and facilitate members work.

Action:

Any suggestions for the £1000.00 EERF funding allocated to ERP to be sent to SR as soon as possible.

ALL

3 Review of Local Area Agreement (LAA2)

The group discussed the importance LAA2, and the new structure that would be used to administer and implement LAA2. Nick Shuttleworth will lead on an Access to Services priority and John Hall will lead on selected Environmental priorities.

JJ said that although we could not expect representation on all of the LAA2 indicators it was beneficial for the ERP to keep informed about current LAA developments. The ERP needed to work together to help inform this process.

4 **Leader Bid**

NS reported that since the failure of the main Essex bid, the other six project bids for East of England Region have been submitted and the results made public. The only successful project incorporating part of Essex was the Eastern Plateau LAG, covering part of East Herts and part of Uttlesford.

PhW reported that the successful Eastern Plateau bid aimed at reducing carbon emissions.

JB asked if the Uttlesford Association of Local Councils could be of help with this particular bid

Action:

JB and PhW to liaise regarding the reducing carbon emissions Leader bid in Uttlesford. JB/PhW

Essex Rural Commission

PhW reported that the Essex Rural Commission is being set up by Essex County Council to examine issues faced by rural life and ways that the local authority should support country living as despite perceptions, just over 70% of Essex is rural.

It will examine:

- Access to services
- Transport
- Availability and affordability of housing
- Diversification of the economy and employment
- Planning and environmental issues
- Education and learning

Essex County Council is concerned about the loss of key services in its rural communities initiated by Council leader Lord Hanningfield.

The Essex Rural Commission Working Party is currently trying to recruit a chairman to champion rural issues.

PhW advised that the key outcomes and findings would be identified by February 2009 and this would help inform the Essex Rural Partnership Strategy refresh.

Action:

ERP Members to suggest people to provide evidence for the Essex Rural Commission. ALL

5 **Update of the Essex Rural Partnership Strategy**

The Steering Group discussed when the ERP Strategy should be refreshed; it was felt that the following actions should be taken:

- ERP Member Consultation event to be held in Nov 2008.
- Refresh of the ERP Strategy to be carried out in March 2009 after the Essex Rural Commissions findings are published.
- No further reprint of the ERP Strategy are to be made until the refresh is completed (An electronic copy is available from the website).
- Next Steering Group Meeting (21st August 2008) to be used to determine what work is needed to carry out the refresh.

John Hall gave his apologies and left the meeting at this point.

6 Next Full Partnership Meeting 24th October 2008, Black Water Sailing Club.

Possible Themes:

- Transport and Access – presentation
- Transport and Access - LAA2

Action:

SR to invite ECC Highways Transport Department to present at the meeting.

SR

7 AOB:

PC asked if Natural England were invited to ERP events.

Action:

KM confirmed that they were but she would try to establish a new representative to attend events.

KM

8 Date of Next Meeting

The next Steering Group Meeting is due to be held at 10.00am – 12.00pm approx, 21st August 2008, RCCE Offices, Feering.

Meeting concluded 3.55pm