



Tuesday 2nd April 2019

Essex Young Farmers Club HQ, Chatham Green, Chelmsford Essex

Minutes

1 Welcome and Introduction

Cllr Simon Walsh, Chair, Essex Rural Partnership, welcomed delegates to the meeting.

2 Apologies - please see appendix

3 Minutes of the meeting held on 10th October 2018

Approved

4 Essex Future Library Services Strategy

Cllr. Susan Barker, ECC Cabinet Member for Customer and Corporate

Please refer to the PPT [ERP website](#)

Cllr Barker explained the background to the recent public consultation and summarised the thinking behind the County Council's proposed 'Future Library Services Strategy'. She emphasised that whilst the borrowing of books had declined by 55%, it was apparent the public still valued libraries as a community amenity. Some new thinking was needed as to how smaller libraries, in particular, could be used and managed in future. This was particularly relevant to rural communities.

The presentation was continued by Katy Chambers of Essex County Council, who provided a detailed overview of the process to date and the next steps. The final strategy would be presented to the ECC Cabinet in the summer. She also commented further on the requirements for setting up a community library.

Cllr. Barker then took part in a question & answer session:

John Gili-Ross (EALC) – raised the issue of restricted access/opening hours and its impact on library use.

Cllr Barker - stated in suitable locations it should in future be possible to access a library with a swipe card.

Ken Edwards (Galleywood Good Neighbours) – raised the concern that many library users are not comfortable with new technology and their needs should be understood and respected.

Cllr Barker - recognised this and felt that by locating more libraries within established community hubs it would be easier to meet the needs of all sections of the community.

Joy Darby (EALC) - welcomed Cllr Barker's input and support and was pleased to be working in partnership to promote the community library concept to parish and town councils. Her concern was that unparished areas might be missing out.

Cllr Barker – agreed it was harder to communicate with unparished areas but ECC was aware of this.

Peter Schwier (Braintree District Council) – felt Section 106 agreements could be used to ensure developers incorporated library provision into major developments such as the proposed garden communities.

Cllr Barker – agreed that developers could help to provide new multi-purpose community hubs. Legacy planning is certainly feasible and Section 106 could provide a contribution. This would be discussed with planning officers.

Jacqui Stone (Abberton Rural Training) - requested the opportunity to talk about provision of training and space for library services.

Cllr. Barker – replied that Katy Chambers would follow this up.

Sue Sheppard (RCCE) – highlighted the success of a community libraries pilot project that RCCE had supported. This had demonstrated the potential of using village halls to host library services and integrating them with other community events and activities which helped to increase usage.

Cllr Barker – commended this approach and recognised the important role libraries could play in addressing social isolation in rural areas.

Beverly Davies (RCCE) – speaking as a councillor for Prettygate ward in Colchester, commented that residents there had rejected parishing in the past and were currently campaigning to save their library, but co-ordination of this was more difficult in an unparished area.

Revd Janet Nicholls (Diocese of Chelmsford) – Requested that church buildings must not be over looked as a potential venue for a community library service. Many remain open during the day with some providing tea and coffee for anyone visiting.

Revd Janet Nicholls additionally highlighted that it is notoriously difficult to include homeless people in any consultation.

Cllr Barker – agreed that churches were well placed to play a role and on the second point recognised the problem of engaging with homeless people. It was essential computer access was as comprehensive as possible.

Philip Wilson (FCN) - stated that a successful library needed trained enthusiastic staff, able to handle matters as diverse as marketing, community development and running a building. Volunteers could bring many skills and much enthusiasm but they would need support and guaranteeing continuity of skills over time could be difficult.

Cllr Barker - replied that ongoing training including DBS support from ECC would be put in place for Tier 3 libraries; a supervisor would support the staff twice a week .

Aga Korfel (CVS Uttlesford) – suggested that volunteers would need ongoing support and said a network of community libraries with professional support would be necessary.

Cllr Barker – recognised support was needed and felt the network idea should be explored further.

Cllr. Walsh concluded the session by thanking Cllr. Barker and Katy Chambers for sharing so much information on an extremely topical issue.

5 ERP Update

Nick Shuttleworth, Executive Director, Rural Community Council of Essex

NS reported that the Strategic Board had met in February and were proposing to conduct a refresh of the Essex Rural Strategy, in order to reflect significant changes in the national and local context since 2016. This would be completed by summer 2020 to coincide with the expiry date of the current strategy. This proposal was endorsed by the partnership. A progress report on delivery of the current strategy in 2018/19 would be presented to the autumn partnership meeting.

NS confirmed additionally that the outcome of Defra's review of Rural & Farming Networks (ERP is a recognised RFN) was still awaited. He also highlighted his involvement in SELEP's Rural Sector Working Group, which would have an opportunity to consider the LEP's Local Industrial Strategy later in the year.

6 FCN – The Farming Community Network

Philip Wilson, Regional Director (Eastern Counties), FCN

Please refer to the PPT presentation [ERP Website](#)

PW explained the role of the FCN detailing the national helpline 03000 111 999 and e-help help@fcn.org.uk (the helpline is open 7am-11pm every day of the year). He highlighted some of the pressures and risks faced by farmers and farm workers, noting that 33 farmers had been killed and 13,000 farm workers injured in 2017/18.

7 Home from Hospital

Brian Goodwin, Community Services Manager, Rural Community Council of Essex
Please refer to the PPT presentation [ERP website](#)

BG provided a brief background to the Community Agents service, which had evolved from the original Village Agents pilot. Home from Hospital, was the latest addition to the service. It was based at Colchester General Hospital and geared to working with people (who are open to support) over the age of 65 to proactively navigate their journey back home; coordinating information and support for the individual, and/or family as required.

8 Update on Funding Programmes

- LEADER – Beverly Davies, Essex Rivers Programme Manager, Rural Community Council of Essex

Please refer to ppt presentation [ERP website](#)

BD provided an update:

Funding allocation £1,627,069

21 grants agreed

Total grants: £1,336,451

Projected number of jobs provided: 67

The projects funded included farm equipment, forestry equipment, cafes, vineyards, tourism and food related businesses.

A significant number of the funded projects were in Maldon District. BD specifically thanked Heidi Turnbull and her team for their efforts in promoting the programme.

- CIF- Paul Ashworth, Strengthening Communities Manager, Essex County Council

Community Initiative Fund ppt provided please see [ERP website](#)

The new Community Initiative Fund was launched by Essex County Council on 1st April 2019. It was expected to run for a 2 year period and would be administered by EALC, with a panel established to adjudicate on applications. The restructured fund brought together various grant schemes run by Essex County Council including the existing CIF and the Local Service Fund. Grants of up to £10,000 could be awarded.

A new Micro Grant Fund was also available all year round. This was a quick and easy access grant with a £500 limit.

9 Any Other Business

None

Appendix

Attendees

| Title | Name | Surname | Organisation |
|--------------|-------------|----------------|---|
| Ms | Sharon | Alexander | Tendring CVS |
| Cllr | John | Anderson | EALC |
| Mr | Paul | Ashworth | Essex County Council |
| Cllr | Susan | Barker | Essex County Council |
| Ms | Lisa | Bone | Visit Essex |
| Ms | Katy | Chambers | Essex County Council |
| | Nadine | Daines | Maldon District Council |
| Ms | Joy | Darby | Essex Association of Local Councils (EALC) |
| Mr | Robert | Davidson | Essex Rivers LAG |
| Ms | Beverly | Davies | RCCE - Essex Rivers |
| Mr | Ken | Edwards | Galleywood Good Neighbours |
| Mr | Oliver | Everott | Essex Fire |
| Ms | Louise | Gambardella | EALC |
| Cllr | John | Gili-Ross | Essex Association of Local Councils (EALC) |
| Mr | Brian | Goodwin | Rural Community Council of Essex (RCCE) |
| Mr | Neil | Harper | Rural Community Council of Essex (RCCE) |
| Mrs | Suzanne | Harris | Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Essex |
| Ms | Aga | Korfel | CVS Uttlesford |
| Ms | Tricia | Moxey | CPREssex |
| Revd | Janet | Nicholls | Diocese of Chelmsford |
| Mrs | Rosemary | Padfield | National Farmers Union |
| Ms | Elizabeth | Rose | Rural Community Council of Essex (RCCE) |
| Ms | Chris | Rust | Maldon District Council |
| Cllr | Peter | Schwier | Braintree District Council |
| Mr | Adam | Scott | National Farmers Union |
| Mrs | Sue | Sheppard | Rural Community Council of Essex (RCCE) |
| Mr | Nick | Shuttleworth | Rural Community Council of Essex (RCCE) |
| Ms | Trisha | Staerck | Essex Police |
| Ms | Emma | Stobart | RSPB |
| Ms | Heidi | Turnball | Maldon District Council |
| Cllr | Simon | Walsh | Essex County Council |
| Mr | Philip | Wilson | Farming Community Network |

Apologies

| Title | Name | Surname | Organisation |
|--------------|-------------|----------------|---|
| Ms | Rosemary | Alexander | Farming Community Network |
| Mr | Simon | Amstutz | Dedham Vale AONB & Stour Valley Partnership |
| Ms | Jill | Attenborough | The Country Trust |
| Ms | Charlotte | Britton | Essex County Council |
| Revd | | | |
| Canon | John | Brown | Rural Community Council of Essex (RCCE) |
| Mr | David | Burch | Essex Chambers of Commerce |

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|---------|----------|---------------|---|
| Ms | Gill | Burden | Tendring District Council |
| Ms | Sue | Carter | Royal Horticultural Society |
| Cllr | Penny | Channer | Maldon District Council |
| Mr | Nicholas | Charrington | Rural Community Council of Essex (RCCE) |
| Cllr | Peter | Davey | Essex Association of Local Councils (EALC) |
| Cllr | John | Freeman | Uttlesford District Council (Essex Districts) |
| Ms | Jane | Gardner | OPCC |
| Insp | Ian | Gennery | Essex Police |
| Mr | Tim | Hayward-Smith | CDA Herts |
| Mr | Paul | Hinsley | Essex County Council |
| Mr | Roger | Hirst | Police and Crime Commissioner |
| Dr | Andrew | Impey | Essex Wildlife Trust |
| Cllr | Sheila | Jackman | EALC |
| Ms | Lorraine | Jarvis | Chelmsford CVS |
| Mr | David | Knagg | Environment Agency |
| Mr | David | Knight | CPREssex |
| Mr | Dan | Kudla | Rochford District Council |
| | | | Rayleigh, Rochford and District Association for Voluntary Service |
| Ms | Victoria | Marzouki | |
| Rt Revd | Roger | Morris | Diocese of Chelmsford |
| Mr | Mark | Nowers | RSPB |
| Mr | Chris | Philpot | Barleylands Farm Museum & Visitors Centre |
| Ms | Kelly | Redston | Rochford District Council |
| Ms | Melanie | Rundle | Colchester Borough Council |
| Mr | William | Sunnucks | CLA |
| Mr | Andrew | Thorpe-Apps | |
| Ms | Edwin | VanEk | The Woodland Trust |