



## Steering Group Meeting

**RCCE, Threshelfords Business Park, Feering, Essex**

**Wednesday 11th November 2015**

### MINUTES

#### **Present**

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Canon John Brown	JB
Joy Darby	JD
Suzanne Harris	SH
Paul Hinsley	PH
Revd Janet Nicholls	JN
Dominic Petre	DP
Marcus Roberts	MR
Neil Harper	NH

#### **Apologies**

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Cllr Roger Hirst	RH
John Buchanan	JB
Nicholas Charrington	NC
Peter Chillingworth	PC
Nick Shuttleworth	NS
Philip Wilson	PW

#### **1. Welcome and Apologies**

Vice Chair Canon John Brown welcomed all to the meeting.  
Apologies were read (see above).

#### **2. Minutes of the Meetings held on 1<sup>st</sup> July & 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2015**

Minutes adopted

#### **3. Review of last full ERP Meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2015**

JD advised that she felt the last meeting was good although slightly short on numbers of attendees.

JN enquired about dates of meetings & this is covered under agenda item 5 below.

JB felt the presentation on Tourism was poor & lacking in statistical information although MR advised that information available is limited.

DP advised that tourism is fragmented in Essex with a huge owner operator makeup that are reluctant to share information & that attempts to get B&B's accredited in the past have not been successful. Many are at very high occupancy levels & do not see the need to be accredited although they are missing the point as to get all accredited would be really positive for the whole Essex Tourism sector.

JB advised that other counties are highly proactive in promoting tourism compared to Essex, although DP stated that compared to neighbouring Kent there is a lack of funding (Kent's budget benefits from income via the crossing to Europe). There have also been some staffing issues at Visit Essex & there will be a reorganisation as they have been trying to be "all things to all men" which is recognised as impossible. The main grant from Essex County Council is under real threat in view of the wider budget cuts although funding from membership is hoped to replace this over time. Additionally, campaigns in the future will be more specific with a financial contribution from those who will directly benefit.

#### 4. Essex Rural Strategy Review

SH advised that by 9am today 1100 online questionnaires have been completed.

Alarming only 15 of the 1100 have been completed by the under 30 age group.

JD suggested emailing schools to encourage 6<sup>th</sup> Form Students to complete the survey & SH will investigate this further.

SH

District responses were discussed particularly those with low response rates & JD will request promotion via Facebook & Twitter to encourage higher take up.

JD

JN will also promote via Writtle College & Essex Young Farmers.

JN

JB questioned whether the survey had been sent to all District Councillors & SH will check on this.

SH

SH highlighted the high number of businesses responding who are not proposing to expand & DP was not surprised as many are in Essex for the quality of life rather than taking on the additional issues with a larger workforce etc.

JD was of the opinion that the economic situation may have affected this response & that employment law is restrictive. She also expressed concern at the whole generation of people who do not consider it worthwhile to report crime to the Police. DP commented that for the Police to get the resources required they have to have the statistics to back that up so crime not reported does not help. The overall message is to report all crime.

SH will be promoting the survey at BBC Radio Essex either this or next Saturday (to be confirmed) on the prime breakfast slot.

SH

An example of a map was circulated that showed Essex Land Cover & this can be used in the final strategy report as a powerful visual aid. A range of other maps are also available & will be circulated by SH.

SH

PH advised that there is a need for Local plans & housing figures to be included in the final report and that consideration should be given to Marine Conversation Zones in view of the lengthy Essex coastline.

DP questioned whether the Essex population had been asked whether they want housing development spread out across the county or new towns be created to meet future housing needs.

PH advised that Local Plans say where housing will be built & JD advised that small communities should have a Local Plan in place with DP advising that this should be part of the strategy going forward.

JD informed that she had had 9 responses to her request for information about Good Neighbour Schemes at present & that a briefing for other councils will follow.

## 5. Next ERP Meetings

### Agenda Items:

- Map Presentation
- Feedback on Survey

### Dates for future meetings:

<b>Monday 25<sup>th</sup> January</b>	<i>PM (exact time tbc)</i>	<b>Steering Group</b> <i>Agreement of draft strategy</i>
<b>Monday 15<sup>th</sup> February</b>	<i>PM (exact time tbc)</i>	<b>Full ERP</b> <i>Feedback on draft strategy</i>
<b>Monday 29<sup>th</sup> February</b>	<i>PM (exact time tbc)</i>	<b>Steering Group</b>
<b>Monday 4<sup>th</sup> April</b>	<i>PM (exact time tbc)</i>	<b>Full ERP</b>
<b>Monday 25<sup>th</sup> April</b>	<i>PM (exact time tbc)</i>	<b>Steering Group</b>
<b>Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> June</b>	<i>AM (exact time tbc)</i>	<b>Steering Group</b>

## 6. AOB

The launch date of the new strategy is still to be decided and a discussion as to the scale of the launch took place. The introduction of the new strategy will acknowledge what has been achieved since the last strategy release.

**The meeting closed at 10.50am**