



Essex Rural Partnership Meeting Minutes

The Warren Golf Club – Monday 4th April 2016

1) Welcome

Keith Blackburn – ECC Founding member sadly died recently. Mr Blackburn was at the forefront of the rural strategy he was a very professional efficient personable person and will be sadly missed.

2) Apologies – See Appendix

3) Minutes of the Meeting held 15th February 2016

Matters arising - none

Accuracy – Agreed

4) South East LEP Activities Update - Stuart Gibbons - Independent Consultant

In 2015 the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD) programme was launched at Highlands Park, Chelmsford, Essex, the objective being to make £14.5m available to the rural sector over a 6 year period. This grant funding is to be used to promote jobs and growth in rural areas.

Calls are made which focus on specific aspects of the land-based sector. The first call focussed on small & medium businesses (SME's) in rural areas. It was available between March and June 2015 and ultimately four applications went through to the final stages and were submitted in December. There should have been another call in the autumn but due to the Government's Comprehensive Spending Review DEFRA placed a hold on the budget until the process was complete.

We expect the next calls to go live in the autumn. These are likely to focus on tourism, rural SME's and food processing. Following feedback from the experience of the first call DEFRA are trying to make it a more accessible process. Ideally we'd like to have two or three calls per year and for each of them to be open for the whole of that period. This will provide more time for people to put their applications together, give an increased number of options and improve access to the process.

There is a need to promote the next calls as early as possible once they have been agreed during midsummer. Draft applications are shared with DEFRA and the RPA and they decide which are eligible to go forward to full application.

A launch event is in the pipeline and Stuart is happy to talk at any point regarding this initiative.

Questions and Answers

CH – What is the programme and when will it start?

SG – A series of events will be held to spread the word, but we do need the go ahead from DEFRA first.

CH – Ideally a programme is required from Jun/July due to closing the date.

NH – Will the referendum have an effect on this programme?

SG – The money is committed and the programme is up and running.

CH – The government made it very clear if required there will be a 2 year cooling off period.

5) LEADER – Suzanne Harris

Essex Rivers – over 20 outline application forms have been sent to potential applicants, the applicants have been spoken to first so we are confident they may make it through.

6 are fully completed and 2 have attended our first application group meeting and both have been approved and almost ready to start. 1) Calcott hall 2) Clayhall Vineyard

Out of the remaining 4 one is at full application stage and waiting to go to a LAG meeting.

Of the 6 applicants 1 is from the Brentwood district and the other 5 from Maldon.

If you wish to promote in your district please speak to us.

Wool Towns and Heritage Coast – We do not administer this however as a Local Action Group (LAG) member I do have a connection. Both LAG's are due to meet next week regarding heritage it is an informal review the Wool Towns leader group want to appraise and assess therefore it will be an appraisal and assessment process.

Questions & Answers

JBr – How and to whom is the information communicated about application that could apply?

SH – It is information in the public domain; some LA's are proactively promoting the programme as are other organisations with appropriate contacts e.g. NFU.

JBr – So Maldon have been very proactive.

SH – Maldon has had previous experience they are considered to be more ahead then leaving others behind.

It was also stated that Essex Rivers have had their staff in place where others areas have not achieved this as quick. Maldon can also promote that almost all their district is eligible for LEADER whereas Brentwood for example is half urban and Braintree half is situated in the LAG region and the other half is LEADER.

6) Presentation on New Rural Evidence Base – Victoria Wiens ppt

Please refer to the power point presentation

Questions & Answers

DP – Average earnings for whom?

VW – The Economically active are but this does not take into account the unemployed.

PD - £629 k how does it compare to the last year

VW – We cannot access this information

CH – There has been a price increase but the visitor numbers are up also and new attractions such as: Stik man – North weald Gruffalo – Thorndon Park High ropes – Great Notley

JGR – How do you measure the Clacton beach areas?

VW - We collect by conducting a survey that is representative, it is not possible to know exact figures however surveys are the best tool to use for free parking areas. The tracker survey is also used as an alternative but we are unable to collate the data in the same way.

JBr – We have two representatives here today involved heavily in built attractions do you gather information from them in terms of visitor numbers to their sites?

VW – No I do not have access to that information if I can include this information then I am happy to do so.

NC – We do feed into Visit Essex, which means it can be mapped and broken down that way.

DP – Varied results from Visit Essex hard to take definitive facts.

DP – The percentage showing the number of businesses could be misleading as it is only showing the number and taking in account the value of a business?

The value is a main point against other smaller businesses with lower turnovers; we need more information regarding the value to the economy.

VW – I will look into a breakdown re employees etc. **To be actioned VW**

PD – Statistical development plan and the national planning initiative are these being used?

CH – This will be used by the County Council as work going forward; the strategy is not finished so therefore is not included.

NS – Regarding the GP services where did these come from?

VW – 2006 but will check. **To be actioned VW**

KE – How about using information via ATM's and also bank branch?

VW – We cannot access bank information due to data protection but there could be a possibility for the ATM.

NC – Can supermarket home delivery figures be accessed for rural areas?

VW – No, the data is not available but a very interesting point.

PD – They share their sales figures why wouldn't they share their journey info?

CH - May need to approach from a national point rather than county level.

PD – Breakdown what will this be used for and when?

CH – Clearly statistics do cover the Borough Districts and will be placed in the evidence base for the rural strategy. Need to choose what to highlight. An interpretation of this picture is open to others to criticise possibly.

How do will best access this data fully,

VW – Data briefing document working with Marcus Roberts collecting data and that info brings together everything in a broader sense.

SH - not circulated to the full grp but the steering grp. WE will add to this and will be turned into a PDF or hard copy that will be available on the ERP website and made accessible to all partners. We are launching this as an evidence base.

VW – I would like to add following your comments today.

CH – Needs to be made as a working document not just a PDF a work in progress.

SG – I applaud this piece of work what this provides is a fantastic evidence base and using this we can make all sorts happen.

JGR – Definition between rural and urban?

VW – The government definition based on output areas.

JGR – What year? Accuracy?

VW – The census that we are working on is from 2011.

KE – What is it we would like to know? This is telling us what we know

VW – Leading to further work and investigation going forward.

CH – we have set about to find out what we know to work out what we need to know.

JBr – Can boroughs and districts be separated?

VW – Yes if it is available.

7) Latest draft of Essex Rural Strategy – Suzanne Harris & Marcus Roberts ppt

This is about what we can deliver together achieve and be realistic.

We want to focus on what we know and what we can say to make a difference.

What are you comfortable committing too as a partnership?

Do you feel what we include we can jointly deliver on? And have an influence.

We want to achieve: AIMS

4 aims: Prosperity - Well-being - Connection - Innovation

Delivery of these via: Voice – Engagement – Knowledge – Promotion - Vision

Questions & Answers

PD – Timing is critical

SH – Timescale – launch early launch July

PD – How will the launch synergise LDP's?

CH – We have had consultation and feedback so how do we make sure it feeds into them as a fragmented county. Makes sense to adopt it.

JGR – Should they not look at and examine?

CH – It's a basis document for that can adopt it and make it part of their strategic plan and then feed into the LDP and perhaps consult with them in a better way.

PW – Yes this needs to inform the LDP it will serve them as strategy.

NH – Planning – as planners we can include in our local plan policies we are also constrained by national policies and strategy such as this can well inform. Planning is not just about housing but transport should also be considered.

DP – Vision it seems to be written from an urban point of view. Rural should be centre we want to engage with the county we are committed for them to come to us.

MR – It is placing an emphasis on the Essex. Urban come to us than the other way around.

NC - Over all, where rural communities contribute fully to a healthy and prosperous Essex.

DP -Engages value and respects both urban and rural

Comments:

KE – Firstly well done,

Aims – suggested start with a verb.

Connection electronically based more broadly may need to consider also a physical connection.

Well informed – people having much more information. It feels as if written for the public sector in mind, can become very important regarding housing affordability as people are not leaving home and commuters becoming more self-sufficient.

SH - Case Studies will be used in the final document – if you know of a suitable case study please let LR or SH know including a have a couple of lines regarding the case studies and which chapter it fits with. Then we can come back and let you know.

JBr- I like the separation between environments and communities put the onus on rural communities.

CH – 6 priorities are gone

NC – Circulation of the document via websites etc does make it accessible we also need to think further ahead on how to encourage people to read it.

KE – Small laminate card with info either side and place in pocket easy to carry reminder short points.

PD – Marketing the product in an aggressive manner short sharp introduction teasers and build the interest up. Danger is will it be read? Lighten it up a bit.

CH – Place teasers from now on

AH – Stakeholder mapping who does this go out to? Perhaps pull out points and target audience marketing.

PW– Case studies come into the teasers leading up to the launch.

CH – Districts, Boroughs and the county are the people who we need to connect with and make a difference by pushing it hard at them.

DP – Disagree with the whispering campaign once twelve emails go out when we launch it people may not read because they know all about it. Carefully judged how much interest is peaked and taken away.

CH – Yes you need to find some way of them reading it.

PD – Send only a snippet and a reminder that there is an important doc to follow it.

SH - True or False game

AB - Exposure to transport is required sustainable and funding access to services.

SH – one of the missing points is re access to services - **SH to action and contact Boston**

CH – Areas to tighten up and other parts to be extended I think we are endorsing it – **YES agreed**

8) AOB

Funeral details Keith Blackburn – Monday 11th April commencing at 15:30 a Colchester Cremation
Mr Blackburn's brother has requested for you to wear a red rose in the left lapel please.
Wake – Rose and Crown, East Street Colchester

Next ERP meeting date: June TBC

Launch meet TBC - requested Joy Darby

John Buchanan is sadly leaving - Thank you John it has been pleasure working with you and we thank you for all of your support on behalf of the Essex Rural Partnership

Appendix

Attendance:

Canon	John	Brown
Cllr	John	Buchanan
Mr	Anthony	Buston
Cllr	Penny	Channer
Cllr	Peter	Chillingworth
Ms	Joy	Darby
Cllr	Peter	Davey
Ms	Beverly	Davies
Mr	Ken	Edwards
Mr	Stuart	Gibbons
Cllr	John	Gili-Ross
Mrs	Suzanne	Harris
Ms	Natalie	Hayward
Cllr	Roger	Hirst
Ms	Anna	Hook
Archdeacon	Robin	King
Ms	Tricia	Moxey
Cllr	Mick	Page
Mr	Dominic	Petre
Mr	Marcus	Roberts
Ms	Lizzie	Rose
Cllr	Peter	Schwier
Mr	Adam	Scott
Mr	Nick	Shuttleworth
Ms	Anna	Watson
Ms	Victoria	Wiens
Mr	Philip	Wilson
Ms	Heidi	Turnball

Apologies:

Ms	Rosemary	Alexander
Ms	Gill	Burden
Ms	Paula	Chapman
Mr	David	Eniffer
Ms	Rachel	Fahie
Mr	Tim	Hayward-Smith
Mr	Paul	Hinsley
Mr	Mark	Iley
Cllr	Sheila	Jackman
Ms	Lorraine	Jarvis
Mr	Andrew	Lowing
Ms	Kerry	Martin
Ms	Liz	Martlew
Mr	Michael	Minta
Revd	Janet	Nicholls
Mr	Richard	Park
Ms	Rachael	Price
Ms	Debbie	Rayner
Ms	Linda	Riley
Mr	Stephen	Sadler
Ms	Jenny	Salisbury